

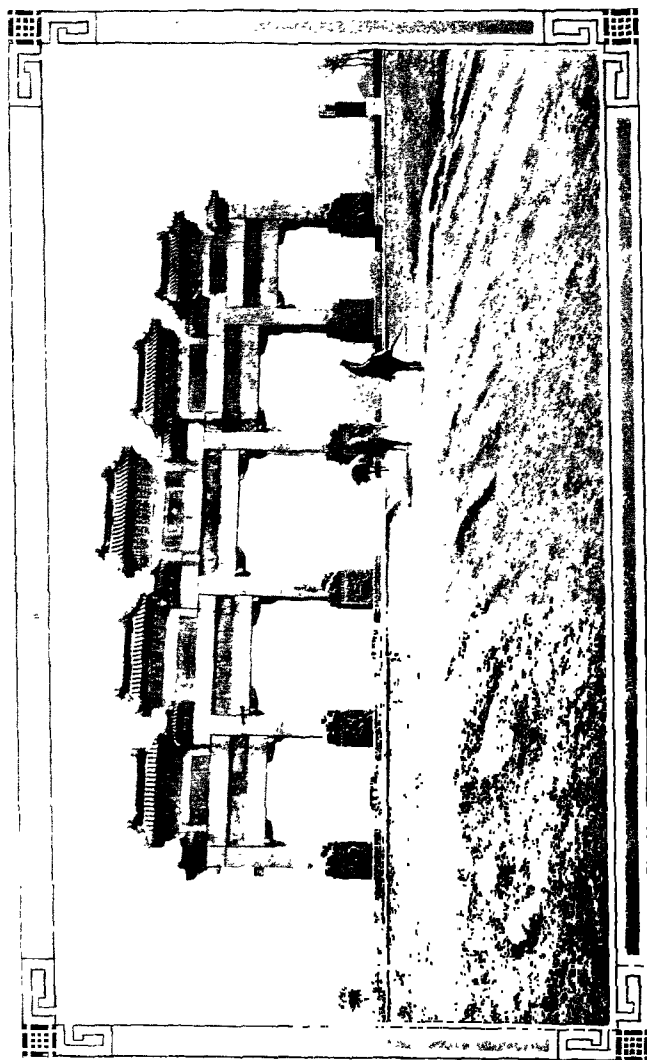
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PEKING

SECOND EDITION
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MARBLE "P'AI LOU"—MING TOMBS.

PEKING

A HISTORICAL AND INTIMATE DESCRIPTION
OF ITS CHIEF PLACES
OF INTEREST

BY

JULIET BREDON



15163

WITH MAPS, PLANS AND
ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

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Several books have been written about Peking by foreigners, but among these only two are comprehensive—Monseigneur Favier's monumental work *Peking* and Father Hyacinth Bitchurin's *Description of Peking*.*

This paucity of accurate accounts is chiefly due to the obstacles in the way of collecting precise information. The more one studies the fascinating old city, the more one realises the tantalising difficulties of learning, even from the Chinese themselves, anything but the merest outline of its history and monuments.† A proper appreciation of Peking is not, I believe, in the power of a Westerner to give—certainly not of one single person—since it pre-supposes a thorough knowledge of China's past, an infinite sympathy with Chinese character and religions, an intimate familiarity with the proverbs and household phrases of the poor, the songs of the streets, the speech of the workshop, no less than the mentality of the *literati* and the motives of the rulers.

*The little book of Father Hyacinth Bitchurin was for many years the only reliable description of Peking by a foreigner. Its accuracy is unquestioned. Bretschneider and other sinologues recognised it as the original authority and drew largely upon it for their own works.

†The standard Chinese work dealing with Peking is the *Jih Hsia Chiu Wen K'ao*, an official publication dated 1774. It was largely drawn upon for a second edition of the *Shun T'ien Fu Chih*, a description of the metropolitan prefecture (first published 1593), brought out in 1886 by order of Li Hung-chang. A third book, the *Ch'en Yuan Shih Loh* (1788), was the foundation of Father Hyacinth's *Description*.

While these and other Chinese accounts contain many important data, they nevertheless often fail to give a cohesive summary of details which appeal to us as essential.

With many misgivings, therefore, and craving the indulgence of the reader, this book appears at the suggestion of some who think that a description, covering a wider field than the usual "Guide," and yet without scholarly pretensions, may prove interesting to the average person. It aims at nothing original—is simply a gathering up of the information of others, a gleaning from what has already been given to the world in a far better and fuller but less portable form. Its purpose is simply to play the part of a friend to resident and visitor alike—a friend (in whose taste you perhaps have confidence) to take you by the arm for a stroll through the city and its suburbs.

There is no desire to indicate long lists of temples or palaces which ought to be seen as quickly as possible—lest the promised pleasures change into an endless vista of labours to be fulfilled, and the hours spent in Peking become hours of endurance rather than enjoyment. Too often the traveller is confused by accumulated misty glimmerings of historical facts, by shadowy ideas concerning this Prince or that Emperor, this General and that Monk, and stumbles about in a haze which, from insufficient interest and the absence of books of reference, he has no means of clearing up.‡ Better far to leave

‡Books of reference are suggested for such readers as care to pursue a subject further. The majority of works mentioned have been chosen because easily obtainable; many of the older ones are out of print, impossible to buy and difficult to consult except in the library of a specialist.

half the monuments unseen and to see well the rest; to see them not once but again and again; to watch them in many lights and moods till they become part of life and life's recollections. Thus only can the true atmosphere of the city, so powerful and yet so illusive, be absorbed into mind and spirit. From the experience of many years the writer can truly say that the more intimately the scenes of Peking—after all—the model and sum of all the cities of North China—become known, the more deeply they are engraved on the inmost affections. It is not a hurried visit to one or two sights which will enable anybody to feel their spell, but a long and familiar friendship that endears them to us and gives each a motive and a significance entirely unrecognised and unsuspected by the passing eye.

Who can forget the soft enchantment of Buddhist temples, the green peace of tombs haunted by fearless things, "doves that flutter down at call, fishes rising to be fed?" Or the grandeur of past Imperial splendours? At first it is difficult for the Westerner to grasp the full meaning of these glories of ancient Chinese civilisation—far more difficult than those of Italy, for example, because, as Howells says in his *Tuscan Cities*, "a prime condition of our immediate sympathy with any life, or epoch, or civilisation is that we always, and every instant, and vividly find our dreary, tiresome, unstoried, unstoriable selves in it"—and we can more easily imagine ourselves taking afternoon tea with Lorenzo the Magnificent or even Cæsar Borgia, than with Yung Loh or Ch'ien Lung.

Yet, if we would profit by Peking to the uttermost, we must put away all prejudices of our civilisation, and we must believe that it is not in one class of interests alone that much is to be enjoyed. Archæology and history should combine to form the noblest impression of Peking, but observation of the life of the people at work, at prayer or at pleasure, with all the symbolical strangeness of Far Eastern life, is needed to complete the picture.

J. B.

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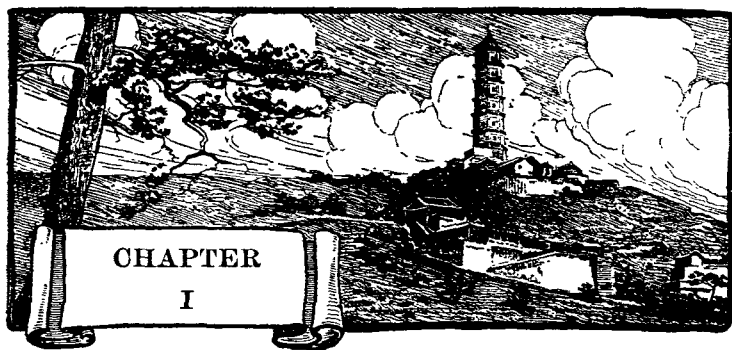
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PEKING—A HISTORICAL SKETCH.¹

CITIES, like people, have their individualities. Some are commonplace and soon forgotten, others make a striking impression on even the passing stranger. Although what pleases one often fails to interest another, the majority of travellers agree that Peking has a rich and most attractive personality. Indeed there must be something lacking in the man to whom the town makes no appeal, for its charm is one of infinite variety.

Something of this is due to the grand conception of the builder's plan, the nobility of surrounding walls and gates, the splendour of palace squares, the vivid colours of Imperial roofs, but still more depends on the general

¹ For fuller details on the early history of Peking, see *Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques sur Pékin et ses Environs*, by Dr. E. Bretschneider, translated by V. Collin de Plancy, and *Peking, Histoire et Description*, by Alph. Favier.

Those who are interested in the history of China may consult *A Sketch of Chinese History*, by F. L. Hawks Pott, the best condensed outline for an introductory study, or *Outlines of Chinese History*, by Li Ung Bing, a fuller treatment from the point of view of a Chinese writer. See also the classical histories of de Mailla, Macgowan, Boulger.

atmosphere of picturesqueness, the striking contrast to accustomed things, and the curious mingling of old and new.

The history of Peking is the history of China in miniature. The town, like the country, has shown the same power of taking fresh masters and absorbing them. Both have passed through dark hours of anarchy and bloodshed. Happily both possess the vitality to survive them.

In early days, when the first Chinese settlers began spreading from the upper course of the Yellow River over the northern provinces of the future Celestial Empire, the district of Yen, including the site of present day Peking, appears to have invited colonisation more than 2,000 years before our era "as a very pleasant land, of streams and meres stocked with fish, and where roamed deer, elephants, tigers, leopards and bears." ²

Historians mention a town called Chi, occupying almost the same site as modern Peking, as far back as 1100 B.C. (about the time of the Siege of Troy). Two miles north of the present Tartar wall, near the Bell Temple, a yellow-tiled pavilion covers a marble tablet on which the Manchu Emperor Ch'ien Lung wrote: "Here stood one of the gates of the ancient city of Chi." This is interesting and valuable as the only testimony to the existence of the semi-mythical town at that place, since all traces of it have disappeared.

² *The Early History of Peking*, by T. W. Kingsmill, in *Peking*, by Fei-shi.

Chi, according to Chinese chroniclers, enjoyed a few centuries of importance, judged by the standards of those rough times, as the capital of the Principality of Yen. Its remoteness from the main currents of national development in the Yellow River valley gave this principality a measure of independence out of proportion to its actual strength. For the same reason it was almost the last of the seven great fiefs of feudal China to succumb to the empire builder Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, the genius who was the first ruler to unify the country.

This monarch took and destroyed Chi in 221 B.C. When his commanding personality was removed by death, the dynasty founded by him in cruelty and blood quickly collapsed. It was succeeded by that of the Hans (206 B.C.—A.D. 220) whose name is still a synonym for Chinese nationality, and whose work in consolidating the foundations of the Chinese State, in extending its frontiers and its influence, in establishing intercourse with foreign countries and in crystallising the achievements of Chinese civilisation may be compared to the work performed by Rome for Western civilisation.

A new town, named Yen, was built under the Hans a little to the south of the city of Chi. It included a small part of what is now the Tartar City, and a larger part of the Chinese City, and was destined for many years to remain an obscure provincial centre, whose rise into prominence is intimately connected with the growing influence of the northern barbarians. The fateful struggle between the Han dynasty and the Hsiung Nu (related to

the Huns) does not appear to have seriously involved the Peking district, but we can judge how rapidly it grew in importance from the records of alien dynasties (of Tunguzic or Turkish origin) which controlled portions of North China after the fall of the great Hans.

Under the T'angs (A.D. 618-907), the restorers of Chinese political union, the ancestor of modern Peking still remained a provincial town—under the name of Yu Chou. It had already become, however, the residence of a military Governor-General. While occupying this post, the notorious An Lu-shan—a Turk by origin—made the love of an empress the stepping stone to a career which culminated in a redoubtable insurrection, and started the decline of the T'ang dynasty.

After the T'angs there followed a succession of ephemeral dynasties. None of them exercised control over the whole of China, and "we may compare this period," says Hawks Pott, "with that era in Roman history, during the decline of the Empire, when the Imperial power fell into the hands of victorious generals." It was Peking that gave China the righteous Chou Kuang-yin, whose ancestors had for several generations occupied prominent positions in Yu Chou. Chou Kuang-yin was the founder of the Sung dynasty at K'ai Fêng Fu, and succeeded in reuniting the greater part of China—all but the northern regions which had meanwhile fallen an easy prey to the conquering Liaos, or Khitan Tartars (A.D. 915-1125). The Liaos were the first to create a metropolis where Peking now stands. They destroyed Yu Chou but

built a new and larger city on the same site (including what is now the western part of the Chinese City), and called it "Nanking," or Southern Capital, to distinguish it from their other capitals in Manchuria—also "Yen Ching," or "Swallow Capital"—a name still surviving in literature. After each conquest the town rose again from its ashes more splendid than before. At this time it already had a circumference of 12 miles, contained an Imperial palace worthy of a capital, and was surrounded by walls 30 feet high with eight gates.

These defences, however, did not prevent the overthrow of the Liaos by the Chin, or Nüchen, Tartars (A.D. 1125-1234), whereupon a new master came into possession and the place was re-named Chung Tu. The Chins showed themselves comparatively humane conquerors. Instead of destroying, they simply enlarged what they conquered, adding a new town to the east of the old one, building another palace within the new fortifications and a summer palace with pleasure gardens beyond them, approximately on the site of the Pai T'a (White Dagoba) in the Pei Hai. Side by side, though each enclosed within separate walls, the two cities together now formed a large rectangle with a perimeter of 20 miles defended by walls pierced by 12 gates. These walls stood intact until the present Chinese city was built in the middle of the sixteenth century and fragments of them may still be seen near the Po Yün Kuan Temple, the present race course, and in the neighbourhood of Fengtai.

The Chins in their turn were overthrown by the Mongols under Genghis Khan whose generals took Chung Tu in A.D. 1215, but not before they had laid siege to each of the cities separately and, finally, to the two fortified palaces, which were strongholds within strongholds. Old chronicles describe how they were conquered at last "with glorious slaughter." Reading between the lines, we can picture those fearful days of carnage and the barbarous wholesale massacres always repeated at the passing of dynasties. No mercy was shown, none expected. The point of view of the man in the street, the humble, plunderable citizen, was of little account in an era when savage conquerors staked the fortunes of an empire on a single desperate throw. A pitiful feature of these conquests, to our modern way of thinking, was the "complete lack of resistance on the part of the non-combatants and their fatalistic acceptance of the brutal dominion of the soldiery who converted the city into a shambles while their terror-stricken victims, often men of far higher mental and moral attainments, awaited death and worse with abject helplessness and accepted it as an established feature of the sorry scheme of things."

In this particular instance the sins of the rulers were visited more directly than usual upon the people, for the Great Khan brought his forces across the border at the invitation of the Chins themselves, since the latter wanted his help to get rid of the Sung dynasty in Southern China. Their short-sighted policy cost them not only their northern capital but their empire and their throne. The

Mongols, once they had ousted the Sungs, betrayed their hosts and, after 50 years of fighting, conquered the country for themselves and established their own dynasty. Peking played a decisive rôle in the history of the Mongols. They inherited with it the services of the faithful Yeh-lü-ch'u-ts'ai, a Khitan by origin, whom Genghis found in charge of the Chin capital, and who later became one of the chief councillors at the Mongol Court (see "Summer Palace" chapter). It is known that two different opinions warred at Karakorum after the death of Genghis: should the Mongol rulers decide to reap the fruit of their conquests in the East or in the West? No Western country could compare with China in their eyes—China which, since the days of Ptolemy, travellers and geographers agreed in describing as the best organised and richest country in the world, and which for milleniums appeared to the children of the wilderness as something scarcely less desirable than paradise. But the Mongols perhaps instinctively felt the impossibility of maintaining their prestige over a people so much superior to them in the arts of peace. Yeh-lü-ch'u-ts'ai naturally headed the "Chinese party" in the discussions on this subject and after many efforts carried the day. When Kublai Khan moved down from Mongolia therefore, he rebuilt (A.D. 1264-1267) a city a little to the north of Chung Tu, taken and destroyed by his grandfather (the site including that of the ancient city of Chi), and called it Khanbalyk, or City of the Great Khan. Now for the first time it became the capital of all China—

of a China, moreover, which the Mongol conquests had drawn into a more intimate contact with the West than hitherto, and that was to reap the benefits of this contact and of a brilliant administration in the form of unprecedented security and wealth.

Kublai chose Peking as the most convenient central point from which he could control not only the provinces of China Proper, but also his domains in what are now Mongolia, Manchuria, Korea, Siberia and Turkestan. A vigorous and magnificent prince, he laid out his new capital in a manner suited to the prestige of a Supreme Ruler. We are fortunate in having Marco Polo, the famous Venetian traveller who visited the Far East in the thirteenth century—a chronicler worthy of his subject—to describe the Mongol splendour and enable us to form an idea of Khanbalyk in its glory.³

Fresh from Europe which in his day was far behind China in civilisation, his admiration for the Orient, however, sometimes led him to exaggeration and inaccuracy. Thus his descriptions are sometimes at variance with those of contemporary Chinese historians, who also differ among themselves about the size of Khanbalyk and the site of its walls. If we sift down conflicting evidence, it seems probable that the east and west ramparts of what is now known as the Tartar city (so called because the Manchu-Tartars at the beginning of their dynasty drove out the Chinese into the suburb which has since become

³ See *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, by Yule-Cordier.

the Southern or Chinese city) stood almost where they stand to-day, but the Mongol capital had 11 gates instead of nine. A few ruins of its mud walls may still be traced outside the An Ting Mên and near the Bell Temple. Unfortunately these fragments and part of a wall in the Winter Palace enclosure, easily distinguishable by the difference in the bricks, are practically all that remain of a grandeur which the world to-day knows only by tradition, if we except those two fine monuments, the Bell Tower and the Drum Tower, both in the northern part of the Tartar City. The former has been moved from its original site further east and repaired, but the latter is actually the original structure built A.D. 1272.

In A.D. 1368 Chu Yuan-chang, Buddhist priest, administrator and fighter, shattered the last remnants of the greater Mongol Empire by his successful rebellion against the degenerate descendants of Kublai Khan who returned to their plains and nomadic life. He then established the Ming (Bright) dynasty.⁴

The first emperors of the new line, jealous perhaps of the Mongols and their works, transferred the capital to the city on the Yangtze, famous as Nanking, and degraded Khanbalyk to a simple prefecture with the name of Pei P'ing Fu. Thus for some years its prestige was destroyed and even its area reduced by moving the north

⁴ For the history of the changing fortunes of China's dynasties in greater detail see *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland, and *The Chinese and Their Rebellions*, by Meadows.

wall two miles to the southward. This humiliation lasted until A.D. 1409 when Yung Loh again made the city his seat of government, and from that time till the present it has been known as Peking, or Northern Capital.⁵

Yung Loh, a wise and illustrious ruler with even greater ambitions for his city than Kublai Khan, conceived elaborate plans to enlarge and beautify it, and present-day Peking owes him the true foundation of her grandeur. Three years before his removal there, he sent high officials to the provinces to collect precious woods for the construction of his palaces. He ordered the southern walls of what is now the Tartar town to be moved back to leave more imposing approaches to them, and rebuilt the throne halls on a scale of unprecedented magnificence. To him are due not only the splendid proportions of the Forbidden City, with its handsome buildings and noble courtyards, but her finest temples and stateliest bridges. In fact, with the exception of a few repairs and some imitations by the earlier Manchus—who, as is well known, possessed no original architectural ideas—the plan of the city has scarcely been changed from his day to ours. Moreover, the work of the greatest Ming and his architects doubly compels our admiration when we remember that in their time Versailles

⁵ The proper transliteration of the Chinese characters is *Pei Ching*, *pei* meaning north, but, following the southern Chinese pronunciation, it has become generally known as *Peking* or, still more inaccurately, *Pekin*.

was an insignificant shooting lodge, the Kremlin still surrounded by a wooden palisade and Hampton Court not yet built.

Had all the Mings been of the metal of Yung Loh the whole course of Chinese history might have been changed. "The swift decline and pitiful end of the dynasty were primarily due to the corruption and incompetence of the later monarchs," as one historian puts it. Sunk into ignominious and miserable decadence, they were unable to cope with the serious disorders in various parts of the empire, or to combat the rising power of Nurhachi and his Manchu armies. But their fall was due indirectly to a woman and to an instance of that romantic passion supposed to be unknown in China.

The position of the Mings became desperate when in A.D. 1641 the rebellion led by the ruthless soldier Li Tzû-ch'eng (whose forces had been fitfully active for 10 years) assumed formidable proportions and, sweeping northwards, carried everything before it. If Li Tzû-ch'eng, when he took Peking in A.D. 1644, had not captured there the favourite mistress of Wu San-kuei, the great general to whom the last Ming Emperor Ch'ung Cheng sent for help against the rebels, and if Wu in his despair and fury at the loss of his beloved, had not thrown over his allegiance to his own people and, abandoning honour and loyalty, joined the Manchus to punish Li, these strangers might never have seated themselves on the Dragon Throne. So the Manchus "owed their dynasty, under Heaven, to the little singing-girl known to con-

temporary chroniclers as Lady Ch'en, the Round Faced Beauty."

In course of time the descendants of the hardy and energetic Nurhachi succumbed to the flesh-pots of the capital and became no less degenerate than the later Mings. Peking, the long suffering city, twice expiated at the hands of foreign invaders the evil deeds of incompetent Manchu sovereigns—the first time in 1860 when Hsien Fêng, a depraved and irresolute monarch, was forced to flee to Jehol while his capital was desecrated by the presence of the Allied armies, his summer palace burned and his treasures looted. Again in 1900, when evil counsels prevailed at Court and the Legations were besieged, swift punishment overtook the city. Kuang Hsü, the puppet Manchu sovereign of the day and his masterful aunt the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, narrowly escaped losing their throne. But the Powers hesitated to depose them lest in their fall they drag the whole fabric of Imperial Government to the ground—a thing the Allies wished to avoid, for feeble as that Government was, nothing stood between it and hopeless confusion at the moment.

As a matter of fact, the course of the dynasty was almost run. Eleven years later (October 1911) the Revolution which led to the establishment of the Republic broke out because, as Macgowan puts it, "the ruling house had ceased to display those moral qualities without which no power will long be tolerated by a people like the Chinese." Accepting the inevitable, the Manchus quietly

abdicated and Peking for once was spared the excesses of rival soldiery.

In November 1911 Yuan Shih-k'ai made his dramatic entrance into the capital as self-imposed mediator between Republicans and Monarchists, and on 12th February 1912, was elected President of the new Republic.

But it soon became obvious that Yuan had availed himself of popular discontent to break the back of the Manchus only for the purpose of furthering his own ambition. He gradually made himself autocratic ruler of Peking—and of China. Supporters, well-prompted, invited him to ascend the Imperial Throne. Like another Cæsar, dazzled by the glitter of a crown, he graciously accepted, choosing to ignore the sullen mutterings of discontent throughout the country. The Dictator's star began to decline from the moment he assumed the Imperial title. The magnificent ceremonies planned for his formal installation on the Dragon Throne were destined never to take place. Yuan was obliged to postpone them indefinitely and to direct that the petitions urging him to establish a new dynasty be returned to their authors for destruction. A disappointed and a broken man, death soon put him beyond the reach of further intrigue and once again Peking escaped the horrors of party strife within its walls.

Although since 1900 no great calamity has overtaken the city, there have been many minor disturbances and panics during these comparatively calm years. The clash of political factions, the ambitions of opposing

statesmen and the fall of cabinets still periodically disturb the peace.

Thus history repeats itself in Peking with extraordinary fidelity as it has for the last 2,000 years. Governments change, dynasties rise and fall, but the motives which set them up or throw them down are deep rooted in the structural character of the race and that character changes only by the slowest processes of evolution. Shaped and tempered by the experiences of the past, it is only by a study of the past and its monuments that we may hope to have a sympathetic understanding of the soul of Peking.

Seen from a little distance with its walls and gate towers sharply defined against a background of hills, Peking still appears what it was when it first became the capital of China in the Middle Ages, a Tartar encampment in stone, "a fortified garrison of nomad banner men surrounding the palace of the Great Khan." Looking on temples, walls, tombs or palace halls, we are reminded of changing religions and martyrdoms, of bitter sieges, of Tartar, Mongol, Manchu or Chinese conquests, of Western invasions and punishments, of Persian, Indian and Jesuit influences, of gorgeous pageants, of traitors like Wu San-kuei, of soldiers of fortune like Chu Yuan-chang, "the Chinese Haroun Al Raschid," of Kublai Khan who made Peking the capital of one of the largest empires the world has ever seen, of Yung Loh, the great builder, of K'ang Hsi, contemporary of the "Roi Soleil," of Ch'ien Lung, soldier, administrator and model sovereign, and of Tz'ü

Hsi, the woman ruler strong as the strongest man, who twice fled from the city before the Allied armies of the West.

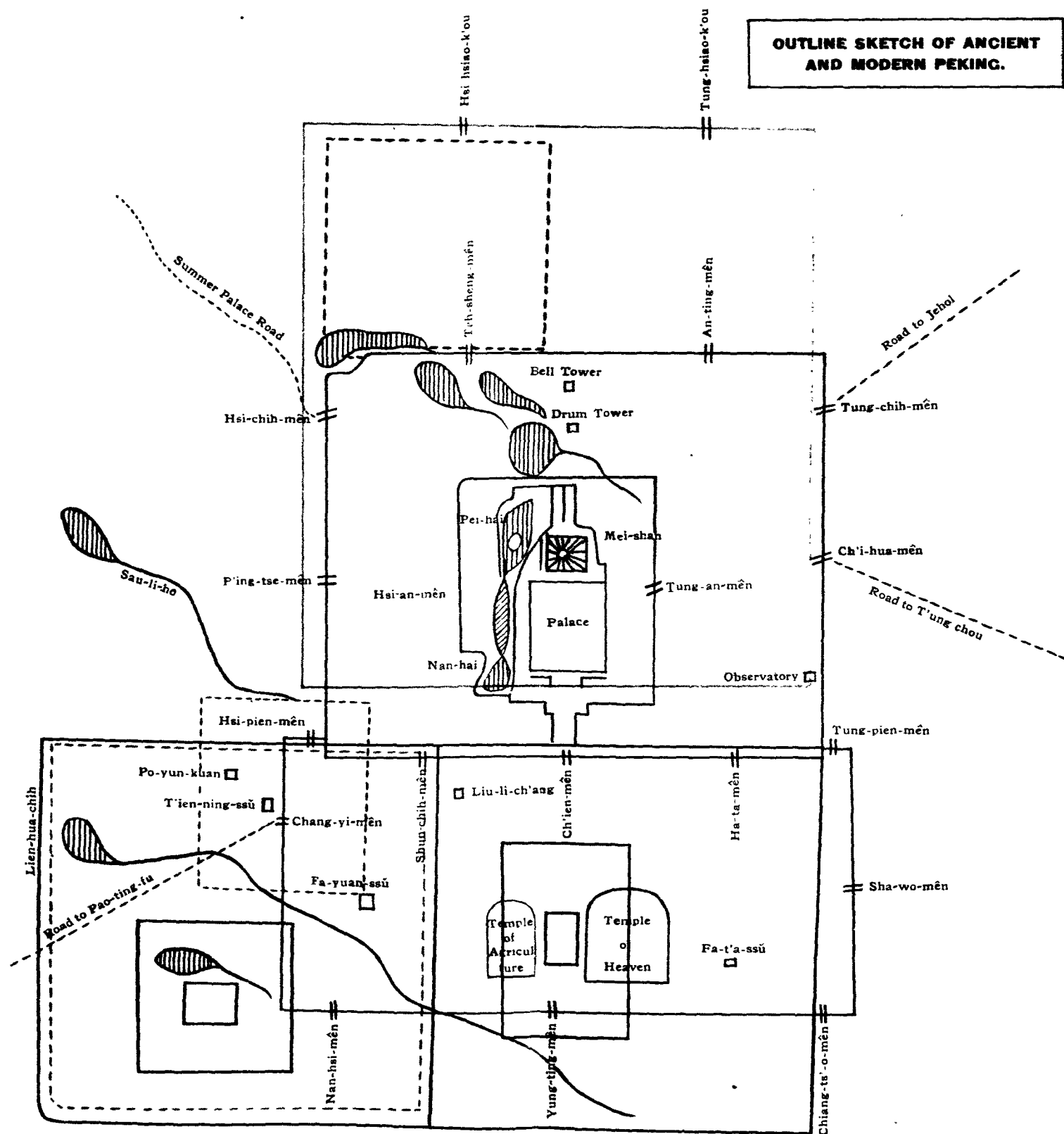
Many of the oldest monuments have disappeared, as a glance at Father Hyacinth's map, for instance, will show, because the Chinese people have been too indifferent to preserve them. Some of us wish that it were possible to have lived for a season in this vanishing world of Eastern splendour at its height. But let us not forget that in those days all that was best worth seeing was rigorously forbidden to the stranger. Peking, like Lhasa, remained for centuries a place of mysteries, of closed gates and barring walls.

Unlike those of Lhasa, however, the secrets of China's capital did not prove disappointing when they were revealed. Rather the wonder and delight of the temples and palaces, so long inaccessible, surpassed all expectation. Their grandeur produced a thrill beyond description.

Without doubt a great part of the charm of Peking is due to its majestic proportions. Nothing is petty, nothing small or insignificant. It is a city of long vistas, spreading over such a vast area that for many years geographers thought it the largest city in the world. Various authorities estimated the population at from two to four million and to their statements the inaccuracy of the Chinese census gave support. We know now that these figures were absurdly high. Peking, in spite of its large circumference, is in many places not closely built over, and the majority

of houses have only one story. Comparing it with London, we may safely set down the inhabitants at about a million, for the waste spaces and gardens of Peking are probably equal to the river and the parks and squares of England's capital.

**OUTLINE SKETCH OF ANCIENT
AND MODERN PEKING.**



--- Ancient city of Chi --- Yu-chou (city of the T'angs) --- Liao capital

— Chin capital — Yuan capital — Modern Peking

CHAPTER II

THE WONDERFUL WALLS OF PEKING

WALLED cities still exist all over China, grim reminders of the conquests and calamities against which their inhabitants sought to protect themselves. None, however, can compare with Peking. The exceptional height of her machicolated walls, the grandeur of her many-storied gates, recalling days of romantic warfare, awe and impress the spectator.

Kublai Khan first outlined the ramparts of the Tartar City in beaten mud during the thirteenth century. But the conquering Mings, mindful of the lessons of history and their own success in storming Peking, rebuilt these walls (A.D. 1421-1439) in their present imposing proportions and faced them with brick that in time has become durable as stone. Nevertheless as defences they failed again. The Manchus broke through in 1644 by treachery, the Allied armies in 1860 and in 1900 by weapons no masonry could resist, and finally the Republicans in 1911 by the force of ideas against which nothing is impregnable.

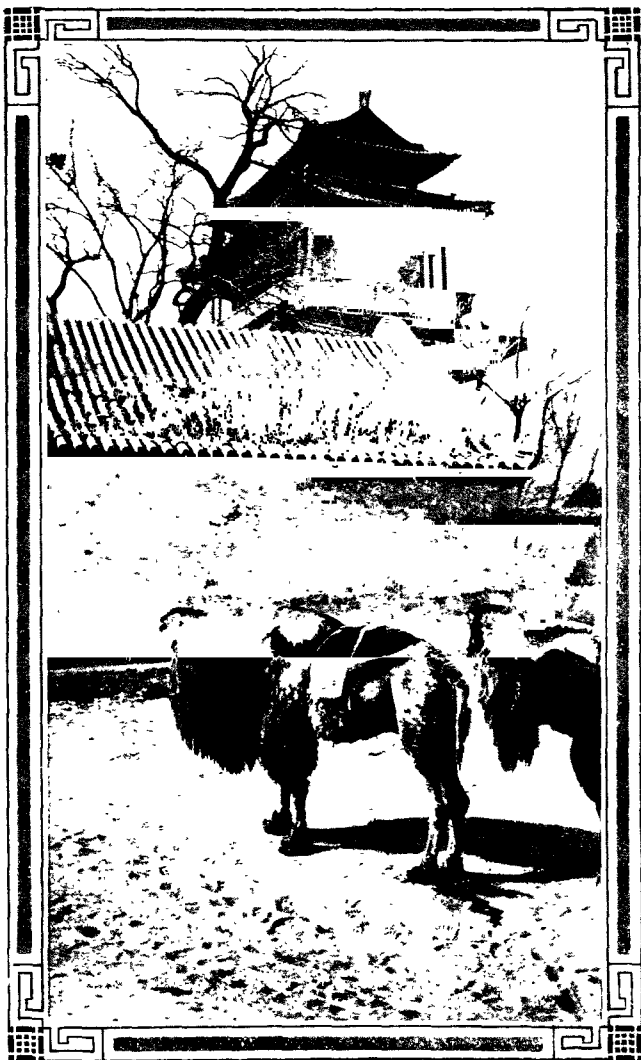
Towering 40 feet above the Manchu-Tartar City, higher than a two-story building, broader than Fifth

Avenue, these noble battlements encircle the capital with a circumference of 14 miles. The moral effect on those who dwell within them is curious. Strangers they impress painfully at first with a sense of imprisonment. But in time this feeling changes to a soothing sense of security—to the comfortable sensation that the massive grey arms can keep out the rush and worries of the outer world.

For many generations no one was allowed to mount the ramps lest he overlook the Palaces.⁶ It was only after 1860 that Prince Kung, anxious to propitiate foreigners, gave the order permitting them to walk on the walls—a privilege more precious then than now as the streets of those days were unpaved and generally impassable, either ankle-deep in mud or dust according to the season

Delightful views of Peking may be had from the top of these fortifications. On a clear day the plan of the four cities is easily traced. In the centre lies the Forbidden City—the innermost heart of them, soaked in history and mystery—surrounded by two miles of massive pink-washed walls of its own with four picturesque pavilions at the corners and four gates, the southern, the Wu Mên, the northern, the Shen Wu Mên, the eastern, the Tung Hua Mên, and the western, the Hsi Hua Mên.

⁶ This, according to Chinese ideas, would have been irreverent. Hence the police long forbade the construction of high buildings in Peking.



GATE TOWER—TARTAR CITY.

Outside this is the Imperial City (Huang Ch'eng), formerly a fashionable residence quarter for Manchu and Chinese officials who were frequently on duty at Court. It covers an area of nearly two square miles and is also encircled by walls. The Ssi An Mên gives access to the western section, the Hou Mên (Ti An Mên) or Rear Gate, to the northern section. The Tung An Mên on the east side corresponds to the Hsi An Mên on the west, and the place of the southern gate, which would correspond to the Hou Mên on the north, is taken by the approaches to the Palaces.

Outside the Imperial City again is the Tartar or Manchu City. As its literary name, "City of the Nine Gates," indicates, it has nine entrances.⁷ But it is commonly known as the Nei Ch'eng or Inner City in contradistinction to the Chinese or Outer City (Wai Ch'eng). When the conquering Manchus took Peking they relegated the people they defeated, as we have seen, to this Outer City where they were permitted to live and trade. The Tartar City was reserved as a garrison for the troops charged with the defence of the capital—the Imperial Guard or Banner organizations.

⁷ The gates in the south wall are the Ch'ien Mên, facing the Palaces, the Hata Mên and the Shun Chih Mên; in the north wall, the An Ting Mên and the Têh Sheng Mên; in the east, the Ch'i Hua Mên and the Tung Chih Mên, and in the west the P'ing Tse Mên and the Hsi Chih Mên. (The literary, or official, names of these gates are, respectively: the Cheng Yang Mên, the Chung Wen Mên, the Hsuan Wu Mên, the An Ting Mên, the Têh Sheng Mên, the Ch'ao Yang Mên, the Tung Chih Mên, the Fu Ch'eng Mên and the Hsi Chih Mên).

To one of these Banners every Manchu belonged as well as those Mongols and Chinese who assisted in the conquest of China. The colours of the banners were supposed to represent the elements. A superstition older than the Manchus had already divided Peking into quarters, each of which was thought to be influenced by one of these elements, so that the arrangement fitted in nicely with popular prejudices. The Yellow Banners stationed in the north of the city represented earth, said by the Chinese to subdue the element of water. The White Banners held the north-east and north-west of the City immediately to the south of the Yellow Banners : they represented metal which is supposed to subdue the element of wood. The Red Banners occupied the district in the centre from the Ch'i Hua Mên to the P'ing Tse Mên : they represented fire which subdues metal. Lastly, the Blue Banners were quartered at the extreme south of the Tartar City : they represented water which subdues fire. Just as each element was supposed to neutralise the other so those wise old sovereigns (profiting by the lesson of mutinous troops and rebellious generals) argued that their armed units, thus subdivided, would, in the event of insurrection, subdue one another. In any case the principle of harmonious distribution which even the modern servant pursues in the smallest household details—so deeply is it ingrained in the Chinese mind—was satisfied.

The southern wall of the Tartar City serves also as the northern wall of the Chinese City. To the east, west and south, however, it has lower walls of its own pierced

by seven gates and built (1553-1564) in the reign of Chia Ching by his Minister Liu Po-wen.⁸ More picturesque and more dilapidated than the grander defences of the Tartar City, they enclose a curious combination of town and suburb. Sometimes they look down upon the busiest commercial streets of Peking and again, perhaps half a mile beyond, on fields, vegetable gardens or groups of farm houses with all the peace of a country village.

One of the finest *coups d'oeil* of Peking is from the Ch'ien Mên (Front Gate) which had such a sacred character that no corpse was allowed to pass through it. This view is indeed the key to the whole city, and the visitor who means to study it must begin here. Here he commands the wonderful prospect of the Palaces, the leading feature in every view of Peking, so that the eye is always returning to rest upon them. Because of the vast sweeping lines of their roofs, they look larger even than they are—look mountainous. Their yellow tiles shining against the dark background of the hills remain the supreme memory of the capital—a picture changing, yet ever beautiful, beneath every caprice of hour and light, whether the noonday sun shines down on them so heavily

⁸ The names of these gates are the Chang Yi Mên (or *Kuang Ning Mên*) and the Hsi Pien Mên on the west; the Yu An Mên (or *Chiang Ts'o Mên*) the Yung Ting Mên and the Tso An Mên (or *Nan Hsi Mên*) on the south and the Sha Wo Mên (or *Kuang Chu Mên*) and the Tung Pien Mên on the east.

Mên means gate, therefore it is tautology to refer, as people sometimes do, to the Ch'ien Mên Gate.

that it seems to raise about them a swimming golden halo, or they lie under a blanket of glittering snow—whether the moonlight softly touches them with silver figures, or the storm wraps them in copper clouds. A symbol of the colourful past, they dominate the city, and always will, however much may change about them with the times.

The proximity of the hideous railway stations somewhat spoils the effect of the Ch'ien Mên tower, and the masses of ugly foreign-style buildings, dotted here and there over the city, mar the harmony of the general view. That wonderful vista of the state entrance to the Palaces with the tree-covered Coal Hill in the distance was still more picturesque when Peking was untouched by modern influences. At the same time, since the outer gate-tower has been repaired, the squares tidied up and the whole avenue paved, the magnificent buildings beyond have approaches more worthy of them than the old dirt and desolation.

Immediately below us, as we stand looking down from this point of vantage, is the front door of Peking. The actual entrance as we see it now has been greatly enlarged and improved. Before the two wide passages were pierced under the wall, the main traffic of the city poured through the single bottle neck of the inner tower—a most inadequate inlet to a great capital. The central doorway of the outer pavilion, which might have helped to relieve the congestion, was only used by the sovereign under the old regime. After the establishment of the Republic, the Sacred Entrance became a general

thoroughfare to mark the disappearance of Imperial prerogatives. It remained open for three days but was closed again by popular demand after the mutiny of 29th February 1912.

Both towers of the Ch'ien Mên are modern, the original ones having been destroyed by fire in 1900. The outer *lou* (tower) was then connected with the inner by curving walls. A typical Chinese bazaar where caps and cap buttons, belt buckles of worked brass and gold, pipes and snuff bottles, jade and enamels, matches and cheap kerosene lamps were sold, ran between the gates. When the Boxers fired these booths in 1900 as a punishment for selling foreign goods, the flames caught the great rafters of the tower. Dry as tinder with the dryness of ages, these beams that the Mings brought centuries before to Peking ignited easily. Columns of smoke and flame shooting skywards met and mingled in an enormous black and orange whirl—a barbarically splendid sight. A few months after the Siege the scene was repeated when the inner tower accidentally caught fire, some say through the carelessness of Indian troops.

The Chinese, fearful of ill-luck overtaking the city, hastened to rebuild both towers, which are practically the only monuments in Peking restored since Ch'ien Lung's time. The construction of the inner one—requiring nearly five years to complete—was a remarkable sight. Its eight-storied bamboo scaffolding astounded Western architects. Not a nail, saw or hammer was used. Poles and bamboos were lashed together with overlapping ends thus

permitting any height to be reached without injury to or waste of lumber and with the minimum of labour in construction and removal, while a sloping gangway of boards tied together allowed the workmen to carry up the bricks and mortar in cloths according to their custom. Finally the painters were ordered to paint false muzzles of cannon on the wooden shutters as before. In the face of their recent lesson from the genuine guns of the Allied artillery, this shows how little the Manchus learned from adversity.

On the south side of the Ch'ien Mên we see, close under the gate, two small yellow roofs which, though seemingly insignificant, cover two important temples.* Neither contains anything worth seeing from the artistic point of view. Each boasts only a single altar. But though many of the larger and finer shrines were never visited by the sovereign, he did not fail to stop here whenever he sacrificed at the Temple of Heaven or the Temple of Agriculture or whenever he returned after an absence from the capital—such as the flight in 1900.

The temple on the east side of the gate is of lesser importance—a shrine dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy (Kuan Yin). What gives it an interest for Westerners is the fact that in its tiny courtyard—a space scarcely larger than a ship's cabin—American soldiers killed on or near the wall in 1900 were temporarily buried.

* Roofs covered with yellow tiles always meant that a building was either Imperial property or under Imperial patronage.

The western temple, or Kuan Ti Miao,¹⁰ is dedicated to Kuan Yü, a Han dynasty hero who opposed the usurper Ts'ao Ts'ao, the classical villain of the Chinese stories. While nobly attempting to do his duty, Kuan Yü was killed and afterwards beheaded in A.D. 219. His head was buried at Loyang (a former capital) in Honan by his enemies who greatly admired his courage, and his grave may still be seen there. His body, but with a golden head added to it, was buried by his supporters in Hupei province. "Kuan Ti has been styled the patron saint of the Manchu dynasty, and indeed there are legends which, if they could be converted into history, might be held to justify his claim to that position." . . . According to one of these stories, Kuan Ti issued from his temple in Peking during an attack which was being made on the Forbidden City by a band of rebels in 1813, and intervened so vigorously on behalf of the Imperial House that the rebels were soon put to flight. Several other miracles of a similar nature are attributed to him. No wonder then that "every Emperor of the Manchu dynasty from Shun Chih to Kuang Hsü showed favour to the cult of Kuan Ti, and showered honours upon him, since they so often needed his support to prop the insecure fortunes of the reigning house." Various temples were erected to him in the capital including "a private chapel within the

¹⁰ See Chapter: "Temples of the Tartar City" and "The Cult of Military Heroes in China," by R. F. Johnston (*New China Review*, 1921) upon which this account is based.

precincts of the so-called Coal Hill where . . . on stated occasions the young ex-Emperor still deputed one of the princes to perform religious rites. . . ."

But his most famous and most popular shrine in Peking is undoubtedly the one at the Ch'ien Mên, which was built for him by a Ming Emperor in 1387. It is on record that the Emperor Ch'ung Cheng, the last of that line, accompanied by his Prime Minister Chou Yen-ju paid a nocturnal visit to this little temple and called upon the resident soothsayer to summon the spirit of the great warrior. While His Majesty was burning incense at the altar, Kuan Ti suddenly materialised himself and went down on his knees, as though he were a minister of state being received in audience by his sovereign. The Emperor saluted him in return, and questioned him about the national and dynastic prospects. "There is no hope," was the spirit's reply, "there are too many baneful influences at work." Here the Prime Minister broke in with the remark: "What baneful influences are you talking about?" The spirit smiled faintly and answered: "You yourself are worst of all." It was not long after this incident that Chou Yen-ju, who was a corrupt and incompetent official, was impeached for ten heinous misdeeds and sentenced to commit suicide—too late to avert disaster from the monarch whom he served so badly."

Kuan Ti still ranks next to Confucius in the spread of his worship which is connected with the Official Cult, and a shrine to him was, and still is, often an accessory of public buildings, not excepting Buddhist and even Lamaist

temples like the Yung Ho Kung. Moreover his name is a household word for valour and patriotism and "time has raised him to a pitch of popularity which is really independent of his position in the official roll of divinities, and would hardly be affected now by the total withdrawal of official recognition."

For his good advice and assistance in time of trouble, many high sounding titles have been bestowed upon him, including the quaint appellation of "Demon Queller of the Three Worlds" which was accompanied by a special patent, or golden warrant, and the presentation of an embroidered robe and state cap, deposited in this very temple under the Tartar walls.

Every emperor down to the days of Kuang Hsü showed his appreciation of the popular hero by offering "small sacrifices" at this his central shrine, rebuilt in 1828. Let into the wall of the reception room, where Their Majesties rested behind the tiny sanctuary, is an unusually thick slab of old jade carved in a bamboo design. The leaves are cunningly arranged to form the characters of a poem, and an inscription attributes the picture to the brush of Kuan Ti himself. The tablet was brought to Peking from the south under the early Manchus with Kuan Ti's iron seal which disappeared in the Boxer convulsion.¹¹

¹¹ Among his other offices, Kuan Ti held the honorary and invisible presidency of the well known "Heaven and Earth Association," or Triad Society, an organisation akin to the Boxers. "All lodges," says an authority on this much dreaded secret society, "have shrines to Kuan Ti, the God of War, whom the members seem to regard as their tutelary deity."

No one should leave Peking without making a complete tour of the Tartar walls. But those who have neither the time nor the energy for such a trip should at least walk from the Ch'ien Mên as far as the Hata Mên, the next gate to the east, and the short distance beyond the latter (about a mile) to the Observatory.

The stretch of wall between the Ch'ien Mên and the Hata Mên¹² is historic ground. From this vantage point the Chinese bombarded the Legations in 1900, and foot by foot the besieged garrison contested it. The remains of one of the barricades, constructed of materials taken from the wall itself, are still visible above the Water Gate where some of the bitterest struggles of those memorable days took place and the guns of the Relief Column shelled the Palace in just retribution.

After the Siege the Powers demanded this portion of the wall handed over to them to be patrolled by their troops as a measure of protection to the Diplomatic Quarter lest such a commanding position might at any time prove a menace to its safety. To defend it adequately iron gates were put up, loop holes made, subterranean passages constructed, and a wireless mast erected by the Americans in order that no subsequent uprising should ever again cut off the Legations from communication with the sea.

Later the paved walk from gate to gate, a favourite promenade of Peking residents, was made. Smooth and

¹² Popularly so-called after the Hata Wang (prince) whose palace used to be near by.

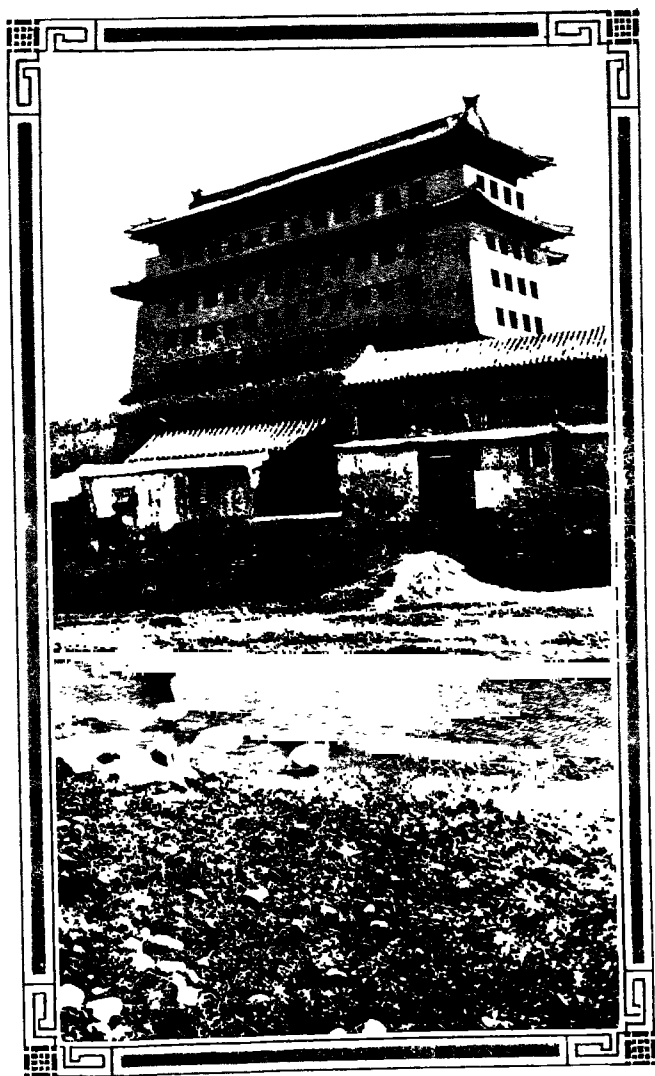
free from vegetation, this strip contrasts favourably with the remaining 13 miles of wall under Chinese control where a narrow pathway, rough and uneven, meanders between the shrubs and grasses that spring up after the summer rains like a luxuriant jungle, forcing their way through the brick pavement from the rich mud below.

Walking eastward, we look down on our left upon the Legation Quarter where many men of many minds have constructed an inharmonious whole, contrasting most unfavourably with the dignified unity of the Palaces beyond. Truly the Chinese understand better than we how to adapt their buildings to the surrounding landscape, the frame to the picture, and the picture to the frame. On our right lies the Chinese City. In summer when all the trees—of which almost every little courtyard contains one or two—are in leaf, it gives the impression not of a town but of a huge park dominated by the blue dome of the Temple of Heaven which rises like a graceful stone flower above the foliage.

The Hata Mên, or Gate of Sublime Learning, is typical of all the other towers; 99 feet high, it allows free and uninterrupted passage for the good spirits who soar through the air, according to the necromancers, at a height of 100 feet. The system of double doorways connected by walls which extend in semi-circular form—the convex side towards the country as a double protection to the inner Mên that opens direct into the city—is common to most of the gates. So are the archways of solid granite, the painted cannon on the portholes and the heavy wooden

doors which, until a few years ago, were closed at night. The brass cannon, which under the last Mings and early Manchus flanked the city gates, have disappeared long ago. It is odd to see the enceintes that for so many centuries were filled with armed men and noisy with the blare of trumpets and gongs (for to terrify the enemy by deafening him was half the battle according to the old Oriental idea) now devoted to peaceful industrial purposes such as coal yards or open air bazaars where cheap pottery is sold.

From the south-east corner of the wall beyond the Hata Mên we look down upon the canal and the ramparts of the Chinese City. The pavilion there is also worth inspecting. The Chinese call it the Fox Tower and believe it to be haunted by a fox for whose ghostly comings and goings its doors are left open. This was the tower shelled by the Russians in 1900, and we can see where the huge hole in the splendid roof has been economically but shamefully repaired with pieces of zinc. The grand pillars and cross-beams which show the wonderful construction of the tower, the ladders covered with a velvet carpet of dust leading from story to story, were, fortunately, uninjured. An abode of bats and swallows nowadays, the tower in its perpetual dusk evokes an eerie feeling as one enters. Little imagination is required to believe it indeed haunted. But the ghosts we see there are the ghosts of Mongol or Ming or Manchu warriors in velvet and satin uniforms, holding in their shadowy hands bows and arrows and twisted pikes or clumsy jingals.



THE "FOX TOWER"—TARTAR CITY WALL.

The most important landmark of the east wall, however, is the Observatory, part of which is built on a buttress higher than the wall itself, though the only entrance to it is through the old buildings below. The tall tower of the Persian astronomers¹³ erected here by Kublai Khan about A.D. 1280 stood at what was then the south-east angle of his capital. When the Ming Emperor Yung Loh tore down the southern wall and extended the city southwards to the present line of the Hata Mên and Ch'ien Mên, he also repaired this building and appointed native astronomers to serve the crude bronze instruments of the day. Thus long before the Jesuit Fathers brought Western knowledge to China, we find that the Chinese had worked out an astronomical system of their own. They believed the earth was the centre of the universe and that the sun, moon and stars were carried about it, like portable stoves about a person to warm him. Their world and themselves were out of proportion.

In 1685, when six Jesuits came from France, they brought with them a large bronze azimuth and celestial globe as presents from Louis XIV to the Emperor K'ang Hsi. They found the famous Father Verbiest in charge of the Board of Astronomy in succession to the great Father Schall. Verbiest controlled the Observatory until 1688 and introduced Western mathematical precision in

¹³ It is curious to observe that among the astronomers here we find at that time a Byzantine called "Gaisue" (Yule, *Marco Polo*).

the science of astronomy instead of the old approximate methods. The Chinese proved themselves apt pupils. They soon learned to compute eclipses, but when the moment of the eclipse arrived, the Members of the Honourable Board reverted to their old superstitions. Arrayed in official robes, they assembled in the courtyard and frantically beat tom toms to scare away the dragon about to swallow the sun or moon.

It was from the elegant designs of Father Verbiest that Chinese artisans cast and modelled handsome dragon-wreathed bronze instruments to replace the old Mongol instruments preserved in the Observatory court. Some of them were removed after 1900 by order of the Kaiser to impress the Chinese with the terrors of German vengeance and at the same time to decorate the terrace of the Orangerie at Potsdam. According to one of the stipulations of the Peace Treaty between the Allied Powers and Germany (1919) Verbiest's masterpieces have now been returned.

Though historically their site is of the greatest interest, the actual buildings of the Observatory are modern. The octagonal tower of the Mongols and the Mings was replaced about 1800 by a wooden structure which in its turn has been superseded by the substantial brick terrace of to-day.

Two interesting ruins close by may be seen from this terrace—the Imperial Granaries and the Examination Halls. The former are a line of dilapidated buildings on the east side near the moat—buildings so ruinous that

they threaten to collapse one day when the trains of the Round-The-City-Railway jar them. Here the tribute rice that constituted part of the Bannermen's pay in kind was formerly stored after its long journey up the Grand Canal from the Yangtze Valley.

Of the Examination Halls nothing now remains save a few stone foundations of the pavilions where the hopes of generations found disappointment or fulfilment. Built by the Ming Emperor Yung Loh, they were originally a collection of tiled sheds, suggesting cattle pens, in a large enclosure, but, though architecturally insignificant, their moral importance was enormous. Every third year thousands of students came from the provinces to be examined in them for literary degrees on the old classical system—and the successful candidates received the plums of officialdom. According to our ideas, it was the competitive system carried to burlesque when men wrote essays on Confucian philosophy as a proof of their fitness to govern. The Chinese, however, took it seriously and the ordeal was severe. Candidates were kept in solitary confinement in their cells for three days and two nights, a board for a seat, another for a table, their only luxuries. If they died under the strain, as sometimes happened, a hole was cut in the wall to allow the removal of the body, for the gates once sealed by the Imperial Commissioners, they could not be opened on any pretext. "In practice, however, this elaborate precaution did not prevent fraud. Essays were often bought beforehand, judges bribed to recognise certain marks, and needy scholars, too poor to bribe and

too humble to impress, sometimes personated the dunces of great families."

The Emperor Kuang Hsü attempted the modernization of this effete system by his Reform Decrees of 1898. Yet it was only after 1900 that the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi succeeded in sweeping away the classical examinations which she wisely realised constituted the chief obstacle to any effective reform of the body politic, and replacing them by modern educational methods. But she took pains to gild the pill for the *literati* by pointing out that the colleges existing in the time of that model ruler Duke Chou—3,000 years ago—were conducted on lines not very different from the foreign universities of the present day, that in establishing similar institutions China was not copying the West but only reverting to her original system—far older than the one she abolished which was after all quite a modern innovation, having been introduced for the first time under the Ming dynasty about A.D. 1390.

The Examination Halls had outlived their usefulness. Empty and neglected, they fell into disrepair. Some say that the Legations after the Siege being in need of repairs and bricks being at a premium, the buildings were torn down and their materials used for reconstructing diplomatic compounds. Whatever truth there may be in this theory, one thing is certain—nothing now remains of the gateway to Chinese officialdom but a memory.

The walk back along the walls at the sunset hour is delightful. The day is ending in a serenity of exquisite



GATEWAY IN TARTAR CITY WALL.

brilliance. The violet masses of the hills which form so conspicuous a background in all views of Peking that they soon assume the aspect of loved and familiar friends, stand out sharply against the fiery sky. As the light fades, their outlines soften. They seem to withdraw little by little, almost regretfully, into the shadows. Gradually one by one the monuments of the city, the palaces, the Coal Hill, the temples, follow their example fading away in a soft glow of light until, last of all, the gate-towers and the walls themselves dissolve into greyness and—it is dark.

CHAPTER III

THE LEGATION QUARTER AND MODERN PEKING

THE Legation Quarter is the centre of foreign life in Peking. Within the walls of this little international settlement, one finds nearly all the conventional buildings of Europe and America—churches, banks, shops, hospitals, clubs and an hotel. Each architect has attempted to bring a fragment of his own country overseas, so that bits of America, of Holland, of Italy and Japan stand side by side, and the effect of this combination of styles and periods surrounded by fortress-like defences is most curious.

Yet even this unromantic looking corner of the city has a romantic history. The streets whose well-ordered ugliness suggests uneventful obscurity are full of Siege memories to those who endured the dark days of 1900. They were once illuminated by human torches when the fanatical "Harmonious Fists" set fire to native Christians. Their walls still show shell and bullet marks. At least one garden has Boxers buried under the lawns. Even that prosaic ditch known as the Jade Canal has run blood. Its poetical name, so little in keeping with the trickle of dirty water that flows between the ugly brick parapets, is due to its original source—the wonderful spring of Yü Ch'üan Shan (the Jade Fountain) 14 miles outside the

town. Gushing from the rock clear and pure as jade, the stream irrigates rice fields and feeds the artificial lakes of the Winter Palaces till, muddied and malodorous, by the time it reaches the Quarter, it is, as Southey said of Exeter, "ancient and stinks."

Before the Siege the canal emptied itself into the moat outside the Tartar walls through a black-mouthed tunnel with a rusty iron grille. This was known as the Water Gate—a place of historic interest because the troops who relieved the Legations crept through its bars in single file. No one who saw that scene will ever forget it—the bullets flying through the air as the Chinese made a last desperate attempt to keep back the foreigners, the white-haired British general quietly murmuring: "Thank God!" as he saw the besieged, whom he had been told half an hour before were all murdered, pouring out to welcome him, and his handsome Indian troopers with tears in their eyes. The grille was afterwards removed when the Chinese were forced to allow the railway inside the city,¹⁴ an underground outlet made for the water, and the wall pierced to allow access to the station.¹⁵

Dramatic as they were, these Siege days are not the only exciting times the Quarter has seen. How often

¹⁴ Their prejudice against allowing a train to pass through even the outer walls was very strong and, until the Powers insisted on a more convenient arrangement, the nearest station to the capital was at the suburb of Ma Chia Pu outside the Yung Ting Mên.

¹⁵ Peking is symbolised by a dragon, the Hata Mên and Shun Chih Mên being its eyes, the Ch'ien Mên—the mouth, etc. When a rift was made in the body of the dragon by the cutting of the Water Gate, the wealth of Peking—"the dragon's blood"—oozed out through it, says a local legend.

since have its quiet streets been filled with processions of refugees! The plague scare of 1911 brought foreigners from all the outlying parts of Peking to seek shelter in it. But when the Manchus abdicated, when the Republican divisions mutinied in 1912, when Yuan Shih-k'ai died, when Chang Hsün made his coup for the restoration of monarchy in 1917, and when the leaders of the Anfu party fled from popular wrath in 1920, numbers of Chinese officials also came to take refuge behind the loopholed walls, bringing with them cartloads of valuables, and even provisions. In 1917 the Quarter had the honour of giving asylum not only to the President of the Republic but also to the trouble-maker Chang Hsün himself, who, when he saw the game was up, claimed sanctuary there.

Before the events of 1900 the Diplomatic Quarter, as such, did not exist though most of the Legations were situated on or near the Chiao Min Hsiang (Street of Intercourse With the People),¹⁶ so named because here, under the Manchu rule, tribute-bearing envoys like the Koreans, Mongols and Thibetans were given lodgment. However unflattering, it is a fact that the Chinese Government long persisted in regarding Western diplomats in the same category as these messengers from tributary states. Did not so enlightened a monarch as Ch'ien Lung send a mandate to George the Third describing himself as "swaying the wide world" and saying: "You, O King, live beyond the confines of many seas. Nevertheless,

¹⁶ This is now Legation Street.

impelled by your humble desire to partake of the benefits of our civilization, you have despatched a mission respectfully bearing your Memorial.¹⁷ To show your devotion you have sent offerings of your country's produce. I have perused your Memorial. The earnest terms in which it is couched reveal a respectful humility on your part which is highly praiseworthy. . . . As to your entreaty to send one of your nationals to be accredited to my Celestial Court and to be in control of your country's trade with China, this request is contrary to all usages of my dynasty and cannot possibly be entertained"¹⁸

Time and its bitter lessons has brought a great change in the proud attitude of China no less than in the Street of the Legations. The present smooth thoroughfare succeeded to the straggling, unpaved road, crowded in pre-Siege days by donkeys, mule carts and camel trains. The request refused by Ch'ien Lung that foreign envoys be accredited to "my Celestial Court" was granted, under pressure, by his successors. Thus the dream of every Chinese official from the Mings to the Republic that the West should leave the country in its ancient and venerable state—a dream so difficult for the self-satisfied Chinese to give up—was shattered. Economic pressure from the outside world with its diplomats, its missionaries and its quick-firing guns, inevitably brought about the dreaded changes.

¹⁷ This reference was to Lord Macartney's Embassy.

¹⁸ See *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland, and Lord Macartney's *Embassy to China*.

After the war of 1860 the Government was forced to allow the establishment of Legations in Peking. But that they were still considered a necessary evil to be kept at arm's length if possible, is proved by the cynical offer of the old Summer Palace site (the buildings on which the foreigners had themselves destroyed) as a diplomatic enclosure, and later another tract of land outside the west wall. Both offers were refused on the advice of Sir Harry Parkes who understood the Chinese and saw through their ruse for keeping the foreigners outside the capital.

The oldest owned foreign property in the Quarter is the Russian Legation compound, though the Russian was only the third flag to be hoisted over a Legation in Peking (July 1861). For the last 300 years, however, Russia has had relations with China profiting by the relative sureness of her land communications as compared with the rare and difficult sea-communications of other nations in early days. Chinese historians of the fourteenth century tell us of Russians resident in Peking at that time and even of a company of Russian Guards in the service of China's sovereigns. Moreover in A.D. 1619 Russian caravans brought the first sample of Chinese tea to Europe. The first Chinese diplomatic mission to any Western State was to the Court of the Russian Empress Anne in 1731, and we read how it was received with great honour in the Kremlin and performed the ceremony of the "k'o-t'ou" or prostration, which most of the foreign envoys refused to perform at the Chinese Court and which was a bar to their reception for many years.

The present Russian Legation site was the place of residence of even the earliest Russian special missions from the latter half of the seventeenth century, including Baykoff's embassy in 1654.¹⁹ Known as the Nan Kuan, or Southern Hostelry, it was designated in 1698 as the lodging of the official Russian caravans which were started more or less regularly from that date and continued until 1762 according to the Free Trade stipulations of the Nerchinsk Treaty of 1689.

In 1685 during the early years of the reign of Peter the Great occurred an apparently trivial episode which led to permanent Russian representation in China. A frontier fight occurred between the Albazines—a small colony of Russian pioneers who had settled at the fort of Albazin on the Amur River—and the Chinese. After a desperate resistance lasting two years, the Chinese conquered this little colony and captured about 50 prisoners. When generously given their freedom, the Albazines accepted K'ang Hsi's proposal to settle in Peking,²⁰ inter-married with the natives and in fact became Chinese in everything save their religion which they faithfully preserved.

Some years later (in 1727) the Kiakhta Treaty between Russia and China gave the right of residence in

¹⁹ See *Russia, Mongolia, China*, by Baddeley. The same compound was apparently used by the first Dutch and Portuguese embassies.

²⁰ In recognition of their bravery they were enrolled in the Emperor's own bodyguard and incorporated in the Yellow Banner where their descendants remain to this day.

Peking to a Russian ecclesiastical mission which had moreover certain semi-diplomatic powers, but was primarily the official recognition of the religious needs of the descendants of the Albazines. The Nan Kuan was then turned into a cloister for the missionaries and so remained until, after the Tientsin Treaty of 1858, the Archimandrite gave up his compound for Legation use and moved to the Pei Kuan in the north-east corner of the Tartar City where the Albazines on their arrival had originally been given a small piece of land for a chapel.

The actual church in the Russian Legation is the oldest building used by foreigners in the Quarter. It was first erected in 1727 by the Manchu Government for the use of the Orthodox Missionaries, recognised that same year by the Kiakhta Treaty, but has frequently been repaired till now but little of the original structure remains.

The French and British who only acquired property in Peking long after the Russians, were nevertheless the first Powers to establish Legations there as one of the terms of the Treaty of Tientsin (1858) which Baron Gros and Lord Elgin compelled the Chinese to ratify after the Allied campaign of 1860.²¹

The French found quarters in the *fu* or palace of the Duke of Chin, famous for its lovely garden. The Chin family, once rich and powerful, had fallen on evil days

²¹ See *Histoire des Relations de la Chine avec les Puissances Occidentales 1860-1900* by Henri Cordier.

and the property was half in ruins. When the French took it over, they found some of the tumble-down out-buildings full of crickets in cages. Now in those days fighting crickets, like fighting quails, was a favourite sport among the Chinese. Champion animals often cost large sums, and the last degenerate representative of this noble family had squandered the remains of his substance on them. The Legation was somewhat enlarged after the Siege, part of the site of Chamot's hotel being added to it. Of the original buildings, the chancery, formerly the chapel, is the most important which remains.

The British Legation has an equally picturesque history. Originally given as a residence by the Emperor K'ang Hsi to his thirty-third son (whose descendants had the title of Dukes of Liang) this *fu* was also falling into decay owing to the poverty of the noble owners. The British leased it from the Tsungli Yamên (the old Foreign Office) for £500 a year. For 40 years the rent was regularly paid, its silver equivalent being taken in a mule cart by the Chinese Secretary of the Legation to the Yamên every Chinese New Year.²²

Many of the buildings were beyond repair. Part of the Minister's house, however, is the original palace of the Dukes of Liang and the state approaches guarded by stone lions, the open pavilions (*ting'rhs*) with their red pillars

²² After 1900 the property passed out of the ownership of the Chinese Government and is now British Crown property.

and the quaint kiosks in the gardens were restored and preserved as far as possible, thereby greatly enhancing the picturesqueness of the Legation.²³

The British always had the largest ground space of any Legation in Peking—an area still further extended after 1900 when the sites of the Han Lin College and the Imperial Carriage Park were added to it.²⁴ For this reason the British compound was chosen as the refuge for all non-combatants in 1900. Though the fighting here was never so severe as in the French Legation (most of whose buildings were destroyed) there is, none the less, much within its walls to remind us of a gallant defence. The Councillor's garden, for instance, was turned into a cemetery where hasty funerals were held, often under a rain of bullets. The upper story of the house suffered heavily from shell and rifle fire. Its verandahs became miniature forts defended by barricades of sand-bags—and "a motley collection these sand-bags were, such as probably never had been seen in defence works before. Every colour under the sun and every texture was employed," silks and satins, curtains, carpets and embroideries being ruthlessly cut up to make them. Perhaps the hottest corner of the defence in the British Legation overlooked the Mongol Market, where the

²³ One of these kiosks, still in use, became the bell tower for the chapel. Its bell sounded the alarm for general attacks during the Siege.

²⁴ In the Carriage Park the elephants and elephant cars, long used on state occasions by China's sovereigns, were kept. The elephants were sent as tribute from Nepaul and Annam.

Children of the Steppes came to barter their turquoises and skins for the luxuries of civilization. Strongly held by Chinese troops, it was a source of danger to the Legation until finally cleared and burned in a sortie commanded by Captain Halliday who was wounded and received for his gallant action the only V.C. given for the Siege.

A piece of the north-east wall facing the Jade Canal has been preserved riddled with bullet holes and bearing a rough inscription, now nearly obliterated, "Lest We Forget." In the present policy of the Powers to "let bygones be bygones," perhaps we find an answer to the natural question: "Why are this half-effaced quotation and the insignificant monument near the Legation gate the only memorials of those anxious days when the foreign community of Peking suffered from shot and shell, from burning heat and insufficient food and water through the never-to-be-forgotten summer of 1900?"²⁵

Once the French and British had established their Legations, other nations soon followed suit. Most of the newcomers rented or bought property near those already

²⁵ The Siege still waits for an adequate historian—someone to do what Trevelyan did for the Siege of Cawnpore. Meanwhile various interesting books on the subjects have been published. *China in Convulsion* by Arthur Smith gives a good account of the Siege and its aftermath. *Indiscreet Letters from Peking* by Putnam Weale, though exaggerated and often prejudiced, is the most graphic and best known description of the Siege itself and the subsequent sack of Peking. *The Siege of the Legations* by Rev. Roland Allan is a simple narrative of daily happenings in the British Legation, and *La Défense de la Légation de France* by Eugène Darcy is a straightforward and dignified story of a most important section of the defence.

installed till at last, within a rectangle bounded by the city wall on the south, were situated all the Legations except the Italian, burnt during the Siege, and the Belgian.²⁶ The majority occupied approximately the same sites as they do now, except that before 1900 they had considerably smaller compounds and were separated from one another by groups of Chinese houses.

A notable exception to the general rule were the Americans who first occupied the property where the building of the Banque de l'Indo-Chine now stands. The ground was once privately owned by Dr. Wells Williams, the famous author of the *Middle Kingdom*.²⁷ When the American Legation was first definitely established in Peking (20th July 1862), the French once again proved their long standing friendliness towards America by offering hospitality to the Mission. This was gratefully though temporarily accepted. Later Dr. Williams' property was taken over by Colonel Denby, the new American Minister who afterwards sold it to the Koreans, and finally it passed into the hands of its present owners.

At the conclusion of the Siege, the American diplomats moved for a time into the San Kuan Miao, now the residence of the American Military and Naval Attachés, while waiting for their present quarters to be completed in 1905. Congress appropriated \$60,000 for the new

²⁶ The German Legation was established somewhat later than the others on ground bought by the Kingdom of Prussia.

²⁷ A standard work which still holds an authoritative place among the books on China.

building on the present site, taken over from Chinese owners, and these buildings were, with the exception of the Legation at Bangkok and the Embassy at Tokio, the first Legation buildings owned outright by the United States Government.²⁸

Near the first Legations were presently established the Inspectorate of Chinese Customs under Sir Robert Hart, several banks, a post office, the little hotel kept by a Swiss named Chamot, the brave man with a fearless wife, whose courage and forethought materially assisted in provisioning the Legations for the Siege, and last but not least important, Kierulff's shop. The opening of this store raised much objection on the part of the Chinese because Peking was then, and still is officially, closed to foreign trade, and though a crack in the door of their seclusion had been made, the Chinese were very jealous of this crack being widened. The foreign Ministers proved, however, that the shop was necessary to supply their wants and forced their point. Accepting

²⁸ The San Kuan Miao was once a Buddhist temple with a great reputation for sanctity among the Chinese. Tablets still standing in the courtyards record the various prominent men who earned merit by repairing it. A legend connects it with the last Ming Emperor. When he heard the rebel Li Tzû-ch'eng thundering at the gates of his capital, he sent a messenger to the gods of the San Kuan Miao asking what to do. The answer came back bidding him draw lots in the Chinese fashion with the bamboo sticks. If he drew the longest, he should boldly attack the foe. If he drew that of medium length, he should await the enemy in his palace, but in case he drew the shortest, he should commit suicide. Fate put the short stick in his hand and he accordingly committed suicide on the Coal Hill.

the inevitable, the Chinese themselves, including the Palace eunuchs, became the largest customers for Western goods. Consequently Kierulff in early days did a flourishing trade—in darning cotton, biscuits, condensed milk, saddles, cigarettes, painted watches, saucepans, insect power and mirrors.

When the Quarter was laid out in its present size and form (1901) it included the sites of all these buildings (most of which had been either partially or completely destroyed) besides many others. After the Siege Chinese were forbidden to own property in the Legation area. Their houses were confiscated and the land used to enlarge the Legations and provide barracks for the guards. The Italians and Japanese divided the Su Wang Fu where 3,000 native Christians had been lodged during the fighting (the leaves and bark of its fine old trees supplied them with food for the last 10 days) and the T'ang Tzu, the mysterious Shaman shrine of the Manchu dynasty. The Belgians also obtained their present site, formerly the residence of the Boxer protagonist Hsü T'ung.²⁹

The reserved area became an international settlement completely free from Chinese control. Its business affairs are directed by an Administrative Commission. It has

²⁹ One remembers him as the fierce old Imperial Tutor "whose ambition was to have his cart covered with the skins of Foreign Devils, and whose loathing for Europeans and all their ways was so uncompromising and carried to such an excess that, for several years before the Boxer uprising, he made it a rule to leave his house on Legation Street by a side door leading to the wall rather than set foot on the foreigner's road."

its own police force, its own electric light. The streets were paved and in some cases named, like the Rue Labrousse, in memory of those who gave their lives to defend them. The guards contribute patrols and means for fighting fires. When the Legations re-built, for the most part with money from the Boxer Indemnity, they were surrounded by cleanliness and order. At last the diplomats in Peking lived in a manner compatible with their own civilization.

The Quarter, however, is already far too small to provide house room for all the foreigners resident in the capital. While Peking is not yet an open port, the pushing Western business agent, the concession hunter, the newspaper correspondent, the loan monger and the curio buyer have gradually forced their way in. The Chinese tolerate what they do not recognise. House owners are glad to get tenants who pay well. Consequently the district between the Hata Mên and the East Wall, being conveniently central, is fast becoming an unofficial foreign settlement.³⁰

The Legation Quarter is directly surrounded on three sides by the native city—the real Chinese Peking. On the fourth the Tartar wall forms a barrier between it and the slums, the noise and the dissipations of the outer town.

The upheaval of 1900 affected the whole city quite as much as the Legations. In their search for Christians the Boxers did not discriminate too carefully where they

³⁰ Foreigners are not permitted to buy property in Peking.

set the torch. The soldiers, once they joined in the mêlée, looted with an impartiality worthy of a better cause. Every fire, every theft was an art tragedy. Historic houses and handsome shops went up in smoke and with them beautiful things that cannot be replaced. Much suffering also inevitably resulted. Princely fortunes were lost and later, in the re-arrangement of boundaries, many fine properties swept away.

But gradually order was restored. Frightened people crept back from their hiding places. One saw them day after day pathetically raking over the débris of their homes. Then timidly at first they began to rebuild. The "cleansing fires" so cruel to the individual, benefitted the city as a whole. The repulsive sights and vile odours which once made it "more noxious than Seoul or Bagdad" disappeared and a higher ideal of municipal cleanliness began. Probably nothing short of such a convulsion could have brought this about in a country so averse to change.

Not that it came in a day—only very, very gradually. The Reform Edicts of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi issued on her return to Peking after her flight, did much to pave the way for reform and to prepare the conservative populace for changing times though even she, with her unusual capacity for seeing how things were going, had no idea how far they would go. But the real credit for the municipal improvements of Peking must be given to Yuan Shih-k'ai and, under him, to the Republican Government.

While the traveller who enters suddenly into a period of social change—especially from a feudal past to a democratic present—is likely to regret the beauty of things mediæval and the ugliness of things new, he must admit that certain modern innovations add immeasurably to his comfort. The new paved streets alone changed the whole face of the city and, to a great extent, its life. The first macadamised road constructed from the Hsi Chih Mên to the Summer Palace for the convenience of the Court and officials going to and fro for audience showed the progressive spirit. It followed the route of the old stone thoroughfare which had existed before Ch'ien Lung's time, and parts of the original pavement may still be seen purposely left for the heavy springless carts of olden days. These antediluvian vehicles are now giving place to motor cars. Hundreds are already used in Peking, the great majority of them owned by Chinese. More and better roads are being built—signs of the times, proving that some day we shall see travel all over China made easy and comfortable.

A new police force—the most reasonable and courteous in the world—is meanwhile instilling some notion of necessary traffic regulations into a people who have little idea of the difference in speed between a wheelbarrow and an automobile. Otherwise their task is not difficult, for a Chinese crowd is by nature law-abiding, going its philosophic way until a sudden moment of excitement, and practically directing itself until the psychological crisis when no one could direct it. In fact of the

Chinese more than any other people one may say : "How kindly men are up to the very instant of their cruelties !"

Had these modern improvements not been carried out with discretion and due regard to popular prejudices, they would certainly have aroused bitter resentment. Even as it was the proposed alterations in the Ch'ien Mèn square started opposition at first among the class of ultra-conservatives who objected to walls being pierced for railways, to electric light chimneys—in a word, to all innovations which might spoil the "fêng-shui" (luck) of the capital. Once the objection was overcome in principle, there remained a prejudice against moving the stone lions outside the gate. Now these lions are very old. They are undoubtedly the same creatures which Sir George Staunton, who accompanied Lord Macartney's embassy to China, quaintly described as "Figures so unlike what they are meant to represent, that they might almost be mistaken for knights in armour with periwigs such as were worn in the time of King Charles."

The Peking populace feared that if these venerable beasts were moved—as was absolutely necessary for the repaving of the square—they would be displeased. What was to be done? The problem was finally solved in a truly Chinese way. The lions were removed blindfold while crowds of people watched them being dragged to their new positions with a blue cloth bandage over their eyes—a curious sight to see in the twentieth century.

The scheme of changes included the opening of the Dynastic Gate in front of the Palace—a gate closed for

generations. When the workmen removed the tablet of the Manchu Dynasty preparatory to putting up the new Republican name, Chung Hua Mên, they found beneath the Manchu characters, and only half obliterated, the title of the Ming Emperors. With the usual Chinese indifference they put this dynastic tablet in a convenient cupboard near by and one of the first things Chang Hsün did on attempting to re-establish monarchy (July 1917) was to hang it up again, thus showing its enormous importance in the eyes of Chinese officialdom.

About the same time that the new Republican Government opened this Imperial Doorway for thoroughfare, it also admitted the public to much else that had long been closed and forbidden, as a sign that the city, like the country, now belonged to the people. Those quarters of the Palace Enclosures not actually needed for the residence of the President or the deposed Emperor became accessible by permit. A portion of the former Imperial grounds were turned into what is now known as the Central Park—the first public park in Peking—giving the inhabitants a place other than the streets for fresh air and amusement.

Nor are the deeper needs of the community being forgotten. A new hospital called the Central Hospital, has been opened near the P'ing Tse Mên. A model prison beyond the Temple of Agriculture is the first step towards remedying one of the most crying evils of old China—the barbarous and filthy methods of treating and torturing criminals. A lithographic bureau for the

printing of bank notes under foreign supervision has been established. An Agricultural Experiment Station will in course of time consider seriously the question of afforestation of the barren hills. A modern system of waterworks has been installed bringing good water to the city. A Municipal fire brigade is controlled by the Metropolitan Police—though many private fire associations still exist. A new Government Industrial Museum with a factory employing 600 apprentices is worth visiting by anyone interested in native crafts. Glass, rattan, lacquer, hardware, woollen and silk fabrics and embroidery are made and sold there. The factory also does printing and artesian well-boring.

But perhaps one of the greatest signs of development in China of late years, and particularly in Peking, are the large number of higher schools which have been opened, notably such establishments as two Universities, a School of Law, a College of Languages and a Police School, besides numbers of elementary educational institutions. Akin to these is the most important library of the Capital, the Ching Shih Tu Shu Kuan, the foundation of which was authorised by Imperial Edict in September 1909. This is destined one day to become the National Library of China and it already contains various important works, such as the *Ssu K'u Ch'üan Shu*, formerly kept in the archives of the palaces at Jehol, besides editions of the Sung and Yuan dynasties once preserved in the Nei Ko (Grand Council) and a portion of the famous collection of books saved from the Han Lin Yuan fire in 1900.

The majority of these new institutions, like most of the new government offices, are housed in ugly, costly foreign-style buildings. Less picturesque, less suitable to the climate than the old tiled-roofed one-storied Yamêns, they are, nevertheless, more practical in many ways and have the advantage of economising ground space. The most important official buildings generally passed on excursions around the city are the President's Office, Tsung T'ung Fu (the outer gate, Hsin Hua Mên, only is visible from the street) on the Hsi Ch'ang An Chieh; the Cabinet Offices, Kuo Wu Yuan, on the Chi Ling Yu; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or Wai Chiao Pu) in Shih Ta Jen Hutung; the Ministry of the Interior (Nei Wu Pu) on the Nei Wu Chieh, East City; the Ministry of Finance or Tsai Cheng Pu on the Hsi Ch'ang An Chieh; the Ministry of Communications or Chiao T'ung Pu, also on the Hsi Ch'ang An Chieh; the Ministry of the Navy or Hai Chün Pu on the Hata Mên Ta Chieh; the Ministry of War (Lu Chün Pu) next to it, and the Ministry of Justice or Ssü Fa Pu on the Hsiao Ssü Yen Ching, north-west of the Ch'ien Mên.

Besides these, the Bank of China and many similar institutions occupy foreign buildings. Nor must we forget the Houses of Parliament though these are not so striking as the Ministries. Situated under the Tartar Wall west of the Shun Chih Mên, they occupy buildings formerly used for the College of Law.

When the Houses are sitting permits to be present at public debates are obtainable through the Legations, and

the sessions are both curious and interesting. Democracy in the making, like the course of true love, "never did run smooth," nor has the attempt to graft Western civilization on Chinese civilization been the easy matter unthinking persons might imagine. The galleries reserved for visitors are always guarded by police and a number of detectives constantly watch to prevent bombs being thrown. The Members themselves are an interesting study. The variety of types is extraordinary: no less so the variety of costume, ranging from old fashioned frock coats to greasy silk gowns. The Chinese, however, are imbued with so much native dignity and are such good speakers even when handicapped by the accent of provincial dialects, that the ludicrous mixture of dress is forgotten.³¹

One striking landmark of Modern Peking, which those who walked through the streets often passed, was put up by the Chinese Government to commemorate a curious tragedy in a city of tragedies. This was the stone *p'ai lou* erected on Hata Mên Street where the German Minister Baron von Kettler was shot by a Chinese soldier while on his way to the old Tsungli Yamên (Foreign Office) in June 1900. The memorial archway had an inscription in Latin, Chinese and German, the concluding sentences of which read as follows:—

³¹ For further details regarding the Parliament in China and the establishment of the Republic see *The Fight for the Republic in China* by Putnam Weale. It gives a good idea of recent Chinese politics—a subject difficult to follow, the truths of yesterday being no longer those of to-day. See also *China, Japan and Korea* by J. O. P. Bland.

“The monument is erected in order to point out that what is good, is good, and what is evil, evil. Let all Our subjects learn lessons from the past occurrence and never forget them. We order this.”

The city and its inhabitants did indeed learn many lessons after 1900, and not only those which the tottering dynasty that erected the monument intended.³²

³² The Kettler Monument, as it was generally called, was taken down when the Allied Powers defeated Germany. The stone has been used to construct a memorial in the Central Park to commemorate the Victory of Right Over Might.

CHAPTER IV

THE PICTURESQUENESS OF THE PAST

MODERN Peking is interesting because all development is interesting, but what gives the city its greatest, its most baffling charm, are the ever-present reminders of a yesterday more strange and fascinating than to-day—a yesterday when there were no factories or railways to disturb the dreamy peace of Asia. Now we find the new mingling with the old in a tangle of past and present. Telegraph wires carry the world's news to papers printed in a mixture of Chinese and Western characters. Limousines pass camel caravans. Shop signs in gilded hieroglyphics are interspersed with those bearing announcements in quaint attempts at English. Tin-roofed Government offices are the neighbours of beautiful temples and the establishment of a modern photographer stands beside the shop of a maker of Buddhist images. What remains of the older civilization, however, is so picturesque that to look back on the days when its illusions were still unbroken must always be a pleasure to whoever has felt that illusion.

The Mings, as we have seen, were capable of planning a magnificent capital. We can still trace and admire the symmetry of the original design in the broad highways that cut the Tartar Town at right angles, three running

north and south, three east and west, with handsome wooden *p'ai lous* at the crossing.³³

But those thoroughfares so grandly planned were simply mud causeways divided, like all Gaul, into three parts. A central raised highway, forerunner of the present macadamised road, served for the lighter traffic, and deep gulleys on either side (since filled up) for the heavier carts. Being of loose earth, unpaved, these roads soon wore into holes where sewage and refuse collected and black pigs and scavenger dogs gathered for a banquet. Rain turned the lower levels into dangerous, swift-flowing torrents. The Chinese, however, argued "Once a road—always a road," and, persisting in the principle that what was made by their forefathers was good, attempted no improvements. The same misguided spirit of reverence for the past left the excellent system of drains designed by Yung Loh untouched till it fell into disrepair and only broken culverts, traceable to this day, remained.

Discomforts were philosophically accepted by a public long ago grown accustomed to them. Physically even the wealthy were not pampered either at home

³³ Like the *torii* in Japan the *p'ai lou* is found all over China. The architectural principle, originating in the *torans* of the Hindoo *stupas*, is identical whether the material used be wood, brick or stone. Lofty columns, two, four or six according to the size and importance of the structure, support a rooflet more or less elaborate, the peculiarity of construction consisting in the way the great weight of the roof is balanced on supports comparatively light, and mainly on a single cross beam. The *p'ai lou* has no religious significance, as many people imagine. In ancient times any man who did a good or wise action or any virtuous widow who refused to re-marry might have one erected to his or her memory, but the street *p'ai lous* of Peking appear to have been built simply for decoration.

or abroad. Rooms were seldom heated in winter, except for the brick "k'ang," or bed platform. Chairs were hard. Carts were springless. The climate was extreme. When travellers were not sticking in the mud ruts of the rainy "fu-t'ien" (period of greatest heat), they were stumbling through snow in the bitter "ta-han" (period of greatest cold), or else groping their way in the sand storms which the spring winds bring down from Mongolian deserts to spread like a dirty hand across the face of the sky and wipe the brightness from the sun. People whom necessity forced out of doors in the season of "yellow winds" covered their faces with cloths giving them a ghostly appearance as they moved soundlessly in the mustard coloured cloud. Feeble efforts of men with buckets and bamboo scoops to lay the dust by throwing dirty water everywhere only added a sickening odour to other torments.

Still, though in old times men were less comfortable than now, they had the consolation of a certain happy-go-lucky personal freedom. No police regulations enforced neatness and order. The streets were the living rooms of the lower classes who, unaccustomed to privacy, did not want it.³⁴ If a man found his shop crowded and

³⁴ It is a significant fact that the Government of China, unlike that of old Japan or even of the Greek States or the mediæval Italian cities, interfered comparatively little with the habits of the people. What a contrast between the sumptuary regulations of Japanese society where every detail of existence was fixed by law, or the Florentine statutes dictating even the number of a man's garments, and the pleasant toleration of old Chinese life gently guided by custom and convenience!

desired more room, he encroached upon the sidewalk. A householder threw his rubbish outside his front door if he felt so minded. A peddler, driving a hard bargain, might block a small lane for hours with his portable stall, unrebuked.

These peddlers, some of whom still remain, were a feature of the life of old Peking—a feature and a necessity. In the days when circulation was more difficult than now and women kept in greater seclusion, housewives did their shopping at their front doors. Only tea, rice and drugs were not peddled. But the purchase of cloth such as was not made at home, of toilet articles and knickknacks, and of meat and vegetables was all done in the street.

Most of the hawkers had special musical calls like the fish sellers of London or the *Marchands des Quatre Saisons* of Paris—calls that may sometimes still be heard in the evening quietness. Many made known their coming by the clang of some primitive musical instrument. The blast of a shrill brass trumpet announced the knife-grinder. The twang of a rude Jew's harp meant that the barber was strolling down the lane. The pedicure went his rounds clacking wooden castanets. The sound of a gong never failed to attract a crowd of idlers to see the performance of the trained sheep, the little dog and the wizened monkey, and at the beat of a certain drum all the children ran down the street after the toy and sweetmeat seller whose stock in trade, worth only a few cents, was a constant source of delight to them.

Not only shopping was done in public. Horses were shod outside the blacksmith's door—as they are still—refractory mules given medicine on the sidewalk. The shoemaker set down his portable last wherever a customer appeared. The porcelain mender would rivet a plate together anywhere. The pipe seller squatted in the shadow of a temple gate and, drawing his materials from the boxes that he carried suspended from a bamboo pole over his shoulder, fitted new stems into the metal pipes of the neighbourhood. Unfortunately among the picturesque, repulsive sights were common. Masseurs, butchers and chiropodists also plied their trades in the open while passers by obligingly made a *détour* to leave them room. Barbers shaved their customers on any convenient doorstep. Lepers and lunatics wandered about unchecked displaying their nakedness and their wounds.

When the curfew³⁵ sounded from the Bell Tower, people went to bed. There was no prohibition against going out after nightfall, but the absence of street lighting discouraged it. Those obliged to do so carried a lantern. If it was extinguished, as sometimes happened, they risked a fall into a ditch and drowning, or perhaps being robbed.

³⁵ One of the great bells weighing 23,000 pounds cast to the order of Yung Loh sounded the curfew, while the sonorous drum of the Drum Tower regularly beat out the watches of the night. In the Drum Tower we still see one large drum and two smaller ones. But the clepsydra, or water clock, that once measured the hour of the Rat, the hour of the Ox and the hour of the Tiger, giving the time to the whole city, disappeared after the Boxer outbreak.

No police force existed then, but a night watch, reminiscent of Shakespeare's Dogberry and his men, patrolled the city fitfully. In addition private enterprise supplemented government control, for life formerly was lived on the communal system involving collective responsibility—the relic of a still older civilization. Shopkeepers and householders protected themselves and each other by guardians and at night the city was musical with the noise of these men going their rounds while clapping two bamboos together “to let the thieves know they were coming.” Indeed this sound, so seldom heard nowadays, was as characteristic of old Peking as the smell of brandy is of Cognac.

As no system of water works had yet been installed, each householder drew his supply from his own bitter alkali well or from his neighbour's by arrangement. Or, if sufficiently rich, he bought “sweet water” from a hawker who brought it from a distance on a wheelbarrow. The water carrier's barrow still makes the rounds of the outer city, squeaking abominably. But the rasping noise seems to tickle the Oriental ear agreeably for the Chinese, like Helen's Babies, “wantsch to hear wheelsh go wound.”³⁶

Were it not for the glorious sunshine and the dryness of the atmosphere, the population of Peking could never have survived the lack of sanitation. But thanks to these

³⁶ A well known Chinese official admitted to me that his supply of “sweet water” from the springs of the Western Hills used to cost him 300 dollars a month.

healthy climatic conditions, the capital has always been comparatively free from the epidemics which prevail elsewhere in China, though from the look of the filthy streets of old Peking one would certainly have inferred otherwise.³⁷

The squalor reached to the Palace gates. Even the open space around the Ch'ien Mên was neglected, untidy and littered with refuse. Weeds pushed their way between the uneven flagstones of the pavement. The stone guardian lions looked grimy. Grass grew on the roof of the Dynastic Gate. Gaps in the railings showed where pillars had fallen. Sometimes a rude attempt was made to close them with thorns or by sticking up the broken stones and tying them in place with string. But it was easy enough to push a way through and not a few lazy pedestrians did so in order to avail themselves of a short cut across the square. This Sacred Enclosure, in theory rigidly forbidden to all, became the resort of idlers and beggars who sprawled there in the sun out of the way of traffic. Thus was typified the old Chinese tradition of splendour beside hunger, sung by the poet Po Chü-yi : "At the Palace door the smell of meat and wine. On the road outside one who was frozen to death."³⁸

The greatest loss to the picturesqueness of Peking came with the passing of the Empire and the impoverishment of the Manchus. During the old régime all Manchu

³⁷ The temperature varies from 104 deg. Fah. to 10 deg. below zero ; yet Peking is in the same latitude as cities like Madrid, Naples and Philadelphia.

³⁸ *170 Chinese Poems*, translated by Arthur Waley.

males were, theoretically at least, soldiers at the disposal of the Emperor and received allowances whether on active service or not. Many of them had ample means to satisfy extravagant tastes, while some were connected with the Court and enjoyed the prestige of official positions.

The old-style Manchu Mandarin was a striking figure. Tall and dignified in his official hat with jewelled button, his long robes of silk or sable and his richly embroidered under-gown belted in at the waist with a carved jade or gold clasp from which hung his embroidered spectacle-case, his ivory chop-stick holder and his beautiful enamelled watch surrounded by pearls or diamonds, he had the gratifying effect of being an ancestral portrait of himself. And when he went to or from the Palace in his green sedan chair with extra bearers following behind, or in his closed Peking cart with a handsome mule and red or purple harness surrounded by outriders shrieking to clear the way for their master, no wonder the simple folk looked on him with respectful awe as he passed! How the whole patchwork of idlers—the bent old men and the pretty children with their slanting eyes and miniature pigtailed sticking out to the four points of the compass, made haste to press themselves flat against a wall or slip into a sheltering doorway to watch his procession go by! The sight of his grandeur was an event in their dull lives—a kind of Lord Mayor's Show, pleasantly frequent and arousing not envy but pride.

Alas, many of these Manchus, shorn of their fine feathers, are now in actual want. Unable to conceive

that their allowances would ever be reduced, they had no means of earning a living in a country where competition is bitterly keen when caste privileges were withdrawn. Too long they had been taught to despise work and neglect scholarship; too long abandoned even their favourite pursuit of arms, their archery and riding which once made them a vigorous race and for centuries sustained their vigour. As for the higher classes, they made the mistake of forgetting that it was necessary to be men as well as noblemen.

Their women, in the days of prosperity, lent a most charming note of colour and vivacity to the grey old capital. Though the Manchu men in unofficial dress were only recognizable from the Chinese by a close and familiar observer, the women-folk have to this day a distinctive costume and coiffure—the long straight gown and waistcoat of bright pink or lavender, the quaint shoes with the heel in the middle of the sole and the hair done in a high knot or mounted on a satin covered board which stands up cross-wise and ends in prominent wings. This odd and, one imagines, uncomfortable arrangement (part of which is often false and detachable) is decorated with bands of beadwork, handsome pins and real or artificial flowers—sometimes with fringes of pearls. Its chief charm is the way in which the hair is made to serve as an elaborate frame, well suited to the Manchu type of features, and throwing into relief faces heavily powdered and rouged in remembrance of the supposed white origin which they claim. The unbound feet of the Manchu ladies contributed

to an emancipation very striking when contrasted with the seclusion of other Oriental women. They were constantly seen in public walking with stately grace, accompanied by their servants. They gathered in groups, like birds of bright plumage, to gossip at temple fairs. They paid their visits or went to Court in carts or chairs, and a pretty face or a brilliant head dress might frequently be glimpsed through the window of a passing vehicle.

The number and variety of conveyances were among the sights of Peking in olden days, and from the outside of chair or cart the rank of the owner could be accurately judged. A reigning emperor or empress had the right to a yellow chair, an Imperial concubine to one of orange colour. Mandarins of the first and second degrees used the green sedan, those of the third and fourth the blue—all with four bearers. Humbler people sometimes employed a two-bearer chair, far lighter and less pretentious. Cunningly designed on a simple framework of bamboo rods not much thicker than a thumb, it was strong with the strength of yielding things. The Quaker colouring of its grey or steel blue cover was relieved by little touches of brilliancy peeping out at unexpected corners—ornamental knobs of wrought brass or arabesques of fine bamboos set in delicate patterns against a narrow frieze of red cloth. Sedan chairs gradually disappeared from the town with the advent of better roads, but sometimes we still meet one of these frail little booths, like a suspended sentry box, swinging in the suburbs on the shoulders of two strong-footed and enduring bearers.

The mule litters, now so rarely seen, were once quite common. Before the days of railways, men from mountainous districts used them on their journeys to the capital. Wheelbarrows were also a familiar feature of the streets, bringing in country produce—rosy loads of radishes or dripping cabbages freshened for market in the filthy water of the moats. Under the walls strings of camels, far more numerous then than now, carried coal into Peking or bore merchandise away with slow measured step, perhaps to the plaintive lilt of a Mongol song. The rickshaw, at present so ubiquitous, is a comparatively modern conveyance in the city, almost unknown until after 1900. Men and women rode far more in the old days and the variety of mounts was astonishing. Donkeys, with cloth pack-saddles, stood waiting for fares at street corners like the cabs or taxis in the West. Mongols had their own riding camels whose paces were intolerable except to their masters. Manchus and Chinese preferred mules. Indeed the mule in North China is a magnificent animal, much finer than the commonly used Mongol pony—and a handsome mule was a luxury of the wealthy. Surrounded by a group of mounted retainers some splendidly attired young prince might often be seen riding one of these fine animals on a high red saddle, studded with brass or silver set on a saddle-cloth of fine silk carpet. These ultra-fashionable young men about town paid as much for their mounts as we would for a well bred hunter.

Besides all these methods of locomotion, there were a dozen different kinds of carts. The ordinary cart was

a two-wheeled vehicle with heavy iron-studded wheels, and a body covered with blue cloth. The wealth and social standing of its occupant were indicated by the quality of the cloth, the trimmings and the trappings of the animal in the shafts. But with slight modifications, the general shape of the fringe-bedecked conveyance of a princess did not differ from that of the dilapidated hack for hire; both showed their descent from the rude "kibitka" of the steppes.

The Chinese long open carts remind one of the antique vehicles that may still be seen in certain parts of Italy. They are drawn by a mixed team of different animals, five in the traces, if it is a "full team," and a sixth following behind to do his share when required. Rope harness passed through iron rings loosely attaches the happy family which may include a cow pulling beside donkeys, ponies and mules. Neither brakes nor reins are used. The driver who lives and sleeps with his beasts scorns such aids. Walking beside his cart, or sitting on the edge, he seldom has recourse even to his long whip. His voice alone guides and encourages the animals and his Rabelaisian allusions are as picturesque as himself. Needless to say, only a Chinese driver can get any work out of these Noah's Ark teams, as the Allies found to their chagrin in 1860, when the native carters of the Expeditionary Force bolted, and all the efforts of white men proved unavailing to move them.

The sensation of the unfortunate passenger forced to journey any distance on a long cart can only be compared

to that of the man travelling across country on a gun carriage. Yet no other conveyance could have transported him and his goods over the abominable roads leading to the capital. Many of them were highways made of blocks of stone loosely set together—a form of pavement (reminiscent of Roman roads) which the Chinese themselves say is “good for 10 years and bad for 10,000.”

Though the railways have caused a great decrease in heavy cart traffic, the system of highways converging on Peking is still used to some extent.

Outside the Hata Mên where most of the carters' inns are situated, it is interesting to watch the loading and unloading of the freight brought by this primitive method of transport. A more dirty, cheerful and healthy looking lot of men than the followers of the open road with their dusty pig-tails, twisted round their heads, and their long pipes between their teeth, would be difficult to find anywhere. From dawn to daylights' end they have journeyed over rough country with never a complaint, and when at last they reach the city, unload and tie the tattered nosebags on their beasts, you will find them enjoying a copious dinner of cabbage and macaroni at some neighbouring stall whose brass crescent proves the cook a Mohammedan co-religionist. Meanwhile their passengers, who are perhaps the retainers of some official or well-to-do merchants, have dispersed (after a liberal gift of wine money for their safe transport) to some of the private houses whose extent and elegance is hidden behind non-committal walls.

A whole volume would not suffice to describe the famous and historical houses of the capital—the residences of high Chinese, Manchu or Mongol officials who have lived in splendour and often ended in degradation. But mention may be made of one typical property in the north city belonging to the late Prince Ch'ing—a house which in the days of his glory sheltered over a thousand persons.³⁹ Originally the Ch'ing estate was half the domain of Ho Shen, the Grand Minister of Ch'ien Lung whose wealth, estimated roughly at 900 millions of Taels, was sufficient to excite the cupidity of an emperor, the greedy Chia Ch'ing. No wonder! The flower garden presented to his favourite by Ch'ien Lung was one of the marvels of the capital in its day. It contained 64 pavilions, some of them decorated with Imperial yellow tiles, and had high towers at the four corners after the design of the Palace precincts which, as one author pertinently remarks, was undoubtedly inviting disaster. The list of curios in his principal residence reads like the furnishings of a palace in the Arabian Nights. Thousands of sable garments, dozens of pearl necklaces, screens of solid gold, dinner services of jade, soup bowls of topaz, trees of coral, several hundred large rubies, several thousand fine sapphires, lacquer furniture inlaid with gems—these were only a few of his treasures.

³⁹ In all Oriental countries the Turkish proverb: "If only a man have honey, the flies will gather" applies. The family system is the life-principle and every great man supports all his relations and connections as a matter of course.

"Now to be very rich is always dangerous under an Oriental Court. This is a truth learnt at the dear price of living over and over again. Yet the hoarding instinct is usually stronger than the fear of death itself in a race in which the horror of poverty seems, through ages of the fiercest life struggle, to have accumulated the blind force of unreasoning instinct."

Ho Shen proved no exception to the rule. He was condemned to death on a trumped up charge after having been repeatedly and severely beaten to make him disclose the total amount and hiding places of his wealth, and all his treasures were scattered. Like the hypocrite he was, Chia Ch'ing issued a memorial explaining his motives in condemning his father's favourite: "Now be it known that the only object in confiscating a Minister's property is to provide a solemn warning for the guidance of grasping officials. . . . The actual amount of Ho Shen's treasure is a matter of supreme indifference to Us: We are only concerned to vindicate the principle of official honesty." *Qui s'excuse—s'accuse*. Between the lines of this interesting document we read Chia Ch'ing's determination to deprive Ho Shen of his fortune and his power from purely vindictive and avaricious motives. But had the Emperor chosen, he might have impeached his Minister honestly, since he was, in truth, the canker eating into the heart of the great inheritance left by Ch'ien Lung.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ See *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland.

The history of Ho Shen's palace—the western half of which was given to the Ch'ing family who were Imperial clansmen—has become part of the history of Peking.⁴¹

Yet the passer by can judge nothing of its splendours. It is always so in China. The greater the beauty of the buildings and the gardens of a rich man's establishment, the more carefully they are hidden from sight. Even when the big gate is opened, our view of the house within is impeded by a Spirit Screen which ensures additional privacy—that rare privilege of the rich and powerful in the East—and protects from evil influences. Our idea that a house is simply a lodging and a shelter from weather is quite foreign to them and they value a residence rather for the size of its courtyards and the beauty of its grounds than the height or grandeur of its buildings. The amount of ground space of a fine Chinese establishment is, therefore, always large, often extending from one street to another and affording its owner the sun, silence and verdure so keenly appreciated by the Pekingese who, having few public parks, spend much time in their own gardens.

As all compounds look alike from the outside, being simply longer or shorter lengths of wall, there is a puzzling similarity in the smaller streets—devoid of striking landmarks—which makes it very difficult for a

⁴¹ By the irony of fate its glory was restored by the famous Prince Ch'ing who played such an important rôle in the reign of Tz'ü Hsi and built up his fortune by corrupt practices as notorious as those for which Ho Shen lost his head.

foreigner to find his way about Peking. This was doubly true in the old days, before houses were numbered. A shop keeper might give his address as Velvet Paw Lane, Fried Fish Alley or Shih Ta Jen Hutung (His Excellency Mr. Shih's street, so named after its most important resident) but it conveyed nothing to the stranger, neither where the street was situated (very often there were several of the same name), nor in what part of its many windings the particular shop in question might be found. If he asked his way of a passer by, the directions given would be according to the points of the compass, and to keep the north, south, east and west clearly in mind throughout the turnings and twistings of a Peking lane is not easy.⁴²

Hindrances to traffic increased his difficulties by obliging the traveller to make long détours. The poor beggar frozen at the street corner, the furniture movers bent under their loads, the droves of pigs or sheep being herded to the butcheries, the dogs asleep in the middle of the street or too listless to move, all forced him to take a round-about way to his destination. But the long lines of wedding or funeral processions were the most serious impediment.

Such processions may still be seen—the last patches of bright colouring left in the streets, and on certain days,

⁴² The foreigner is amused by the Chinese habit of giving all indications according to the points of the compass. Even when moving a piece of furniture a native servant directs his underlings to go "more to the north" or "further to the west."

fixed by the soothsayers as "lucky," they follow one another so closely that, but for modern police regulations, they would still seriously impede the traffic.⁴³

We Western nations have long ago simplified our rites. Not so the Chinese. Socially the most refined people in the world, they cling to old traditions and customs, and in many a family the expenses for a marriage or a burial are met by heroic economy. Occasionally a returned student from Europe or America breaks away from tradition when he takes a wife. The bride and groom, the little bride in semi-Chinese attire of pink satin coat and tight trousers and a veil, and the groom in ill-fitting frock coat and a top hat of the vintage of 1870, will then drive together through the streets in an open landau wreathed with paper flowers. They may even go so far as to be photographed together, the groom seated stiffly, hands on knees and the bride standing rigid beside him—both looking very sheepish and ashamed of themselves. But as a general rule the old fashioned procession is kept up even if the cost of it reduces a family to beggary for years afterwards.

⁴³ The Chinese allow their every day activities to be guided by the advice of fortune tellers and astrologers. The power of these seers has always been, in camp and court, a vital factor in shaping their destinies. When the Dictator Yuan Shih-k'ai wanted to consolidate his position by marrying his daughter to the Ex-Emperor Hsüan T'ung, the soothsayers found an obstacle to the union in the signs of the zodiac, one of the young couple being born under the Tiger and the other under the Gazelle, animals who can not live in harmony together. Yuan did not dare push the point in the face of their opposition and the alliance was abandoned.

The bride's cortège may be a mile in length and include hundreds of coolies carrying drums and lanterns, the pair of geese, emblems of connubial felicity, besides trays full of presents and household goods. Silken coverlets embroidered with the figures of "the Hundred Boys," emblems of many sons, are folded on red lacquer tables to show their richness, dishes, baskets, clocks and cooking utensils are borne along with the camphor wood trunks containing her clothing. Yet this procession with all its attendant ceremony and expense is only the last act in a long drama in which the *dramatis personæ* are match-makers and relatives. And as we watch the red "flowery chair" go by we can but feel a pang of pity for the little bride tightly closed up in it, going blindly to the home of a husband she has never seen. For her none of the blissful infatuation of falling in love. Love as we understand the word is rare in the East. Certainly it is a luxury not permitted to a respectable young girl, as such self-indulgence would work no end of disturbance to the community at large, beside entailing much misery on the individual victim who could not be allowed a gratification of personal desire which might strike at the root of the whole family system.

The pomp and circumstance of both wedding and funeral processions are so similar that until the bride's chair or the catafalque comes in sight, one may easily be mistaken for the other. There are the same tatterdemalion bearers in both, carrying lamps and banners, the same groups of musicians drawing melancholy sobs

from gilded instruments like gigantic garden syringes. There are the same beaters upon old gongs, round and yellow as full moons, that whenever the drumsticks touch their thin and quivering surfaces with trembling force, wail out volumes of protests. The more piercing the vibrations, the more awe inspiring the din, the better pleased are the assistants.

But here the similarity ends. Half the procession has now passed. Instead of tables of gifts and dowry chests, men are carrying paper effigies to be burned at the grave. There will be models of servants, of carts, of horses, of favourite books or robes or pipes—of everything the dead person has used, to follow him in smoke for the consolation of the spirit in other worlds.⁴⁴

Behind these bearers come the chief mourners dressed in sackcloth and staggering along supported by servants or relatives. An official Master of Ceremonies walking directly in front of the bier gives signals for the music to stop at intervals, and the wailing to begin. When he says: "Gentlemen, it is time to weep," a melancholy moan rends the air, and when he says: "Gentlemen, it is enough," the sobbing ceases.

The bier itself is an enormous catafalque covered with gaudy red satin embroideries, draped over a skeleton of poles painted red. But the coffin it covers is simple—

⁴⁴ Lately at the funeral of a certain man, a progressive, this old custom found ludicrous expression. Among the things carried for burning were imitation bottles of beer of which the old gentleman had been very fond in his lifetime. Also replicas of certain sick-room appliances which cannot be named here.

of fine wood or lacquer and far more dignified and seemly than "the loathsome dapperness of our burial caskets." Owing to the great weight, the number of bearers is always considerable. For an Imperial funeral over 100 may be required. But 12, 24, 40 or 96 are commonly seen. Coffin-carrying in China seems to be the profession of the very lowest class of loafers, but the fact that the pall-bearers are unwashed beggars in torn dirty green robes and battered hats—lent them for the occasion—does not detract in native eyes from the impressiveness of the cortège. The coolies are in charge of a foreman supplied by the undertaker. He walks in front of them and by striking two sticks together gives the signal to change the heavy poles from one shoulder to another. His two assistants throw into the air the circles of white paper supposed to represent road cash for the spirits who might obstruct the path of the departed.

Under the Empire the funeral processions of high officials were gorgeous sights costing hundreds of thousands of taels. How a great man lived was important to his moral standing, but how his family buried him could then make or mar the reputation of that family. With the decline of official prosperity and luxury, the cult of the dead is gradually growing less elaborate than it was. The paper effigies, for example, have taken the place of the clay figurines formerly buried in tombs—figurines now so valuable to collectors.

But changes are most noticeable in the preparation of the dead for burial. The sets of jade ornaments placed

on the body,⁴⁵ the pieces to fill the nostrils, to close the ears, to lay upon the lips, the weights used to hold the robes in position, are no longer made. Men of advanced age formerly ordered such sets, as they would order a coffin, when they felt their strength failing. Or a filial son might present one to his father without being suspected of hinting that the old man had lived long enough. This custom fell into disuse many years ago, however, even among the higher classes, though it was continued until quite recently in the Imperial family.

However good Republicans we may be, however much we may admire modern Peking so full of possibilities of prosperity and fraternity, (like Boston or Marseilles) we must admit and admit it sadly, that death, and life too, without the stimulus and extravagance of the Court is becoming drabber. The sentimentalist goes further. He openly regrets the good old days of Manchu power when the streets were unsafe after nightfall and unclean the whole 24 hours. At least we may say of Peking, as Sardou said of Paris, "I regret the old city yet I am fond of the new." Our hearts still warm to the past so heroic yet so wrong-headed, so aspiring yet so bloody and pitiless.

⁴⁵ Jade was supposed to have the special property of preserving the body from decay, and we know that jade amulets were buried with the dead as far back as the Han and Chou dynasties. COULING says—see *Encyclopaedia Sinica*—that an amulet in the form of a cicada was placed on the tongue of a corpse, the cicada being an emblem of resurrection, while those placed over the eyes were in the form of a fish, symbol of watchfulness.

Now China is awakening to progress as we understand the word. It is the wish of her best friends that she should do so. But can she not find progress without ugliness? May not the necessary metamorphosis take place without giving her century-old grey brick walls for new red brick atrocities, her graceful garments for vulgar semi-foreign clothes, her poetic legends for marketable facts and her quaint harmonies of splintered tones for blaring music she need not understand? Let her beware lest the winds of progress blow too suddenly and too strongly and dissipate the delicate atmosphere of old manners and traditions—lest the mists of her past, too rudely rent asunder, drive the treasures of her philosophy to the store houses of old men's memories, as the convulsions of life have already driven her art treasures to the collections of other lands.

CHAPTER V

THE SEA PALACES AND THE COAL HILL

FROM the point of view of artistic beauty, no less than that of historical association, the Palaces are by far the finest sight in Peking. A whole day at least is required to get any idea of the Imperial precincts, giving the morning to the Museum and the Halls of Audience and the afternoon to the Sea Palaces and the Coal Hill. But those who can afford the time may pleasantly and profitably spend many days in the courts and gardens, returning again and again to find new beauties to delight the eye and stir the imagination.

What poetic suggestion in the very name of the city that encloses them—a Forbidden City reserved for a Son of Heaven! The dignity of such a conception compels respect, doubly so when we consider all it represented—the profound reverence paid to the sovereign by the people of a great empire, the immense spiritual power in his hands, the tradition of his divine descent, the immemorial dignity of his office. To have seen this Forbidden City therefore is to have seen something much more wonderful

than noble buildings, and to enter it is to feel the pulse of the ancient civilization which throbbed as mightily in the eighteenth century as ever in that dim past whereof these palaces themselves, though already old, are but a modern record.

On this same site, or nearly, the dwellings of emperors have stood for a thousand years. The Liaos (A.D. 915-1125) had at least one building here. The Chins began the series of artificial lakes in the twelfth century, bringing water for them from the Jade Fountain. Later the Mongols laid out gardens in the Pei Hai; a pretty legend tells how Kublai Khan ordered his henchmen to bring a certain blue flower from the plains of Mongolia to plant in them as a reminder to his children of the steppes, birthplace of their ancestors.

But not until the advent of the Mings did the Forbidden City assume its present proportions. The Manchus wisely made few attempts to alter what they could not improve, though Ch'ien Lung ordered certain repairs and the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi some additions to the Sea Palaces. They also continued the policy of keeping Imperial premises rigidly closed, well knowing that the secret of romantic power is remoteness. Walls within walls surround them—red outer walls, faded by time and weather to a soft grayish pink, with graceful turrets at the corners reflected in the moat below; inner walls dividing the sacred enclosure into the true Forbidden City which contains the Winter Palaces, and the domain where the Sea Palaces and pleasure gardens lie; yet other walls

separating building from building, and courtyard from courtyard.⁴⁶

Whoever expects to find in the Forbidden City something like the palace of a European sovereign will be grievously disappointed. The Chinese palaces, like all their fine houses and even temples, consist not of one vast building, but of a series of verandahed halls constructed on high stone foundations. The Forbidden City is therefore just what its name indicates—a miniature city within a city, with streets of state apartments, dwelling rooms, women's quarters, store houses, theatres, libraries, temples and dependencies—the whole complicated machinery of living required for a sovereign shut up by convention like a Buddha in his temple, and of his Court.⁴⁷

The Sea Palaces are much less formal than the Winter Palace. Lower walls surround them without

⁴⁶ The Forbidden City has various names which sometimes confuse the stranger. It is often called the "Sacred City," and among the Chinese the expression "Purple City" (Tzū Chin Ch'eng) is also common. "This name of 'violet purple' (or deep red)—'tzu'—comes not from the colour of its crenellated walls . . . but from a literary allusion to the Polar Star, centre of the celestial world, as the Imperial Palace is the centre round which the terrestrial world gravitates, or, at least, the whole administration of the Chinese Empire. This metaphor is very ancient and dates back several centuries before the Christian era. The Polar Star is called in Chinese 'Tzū Nei Hsing'—'Star of the Red Myrtle' " (Vissière). The Polar Star is the animistic correlative of Shang Ti, the Supreme Being, whose Vicar on earth is the Emperor. A special temple was dedicated to it in the northern part of the Tartar City. The expression "Imperial City" should not be used for the Palace enclosure, as the former surrounds, but is entirely separated from, the latter.

⁴⁷ Permits to view the Sea Palaces and the Northern Gardens may be obtained through the Legations.

moats, while the gates are less like those of a fortress. The usual entrance is by the Hsin Hua Mên. Originally built by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung for his Mohammedan favourite, a captured Princess of Sungaria, it has a pathetic history. The upper story was constructed in order that the homesick beauty, whom custom did not permit to leave the palace enclosure, might gaze from its balcony at the Mosque built for her across the roadway, or look towards Mecca and her own country beyond the hills. In this pavilion she lived and mourned, therefore the Chinese call it the "home looking building," and remember her as the "K'o" or "Stranger" concubine.

The ruins of her Mosque stood, until a few years ago, just outside the wall of the Sea Palaces. "Services were held there by a Chinese Mohammedan who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, an aged man supported in his crumbling shrine by a handful of the faithful; but he died in 1908 and thereafter the inner walls and pillars fell, so that the place, still beautiful in the last stage of ruin, remained a pathetic monument to the splendour of bygone days. It was pulled down by order of Yuan Shih-k'ai, ostensibly because it had become unsafe and because the site was required for the erection of barracks, but really because its tower dominated the Palace grounds at the point where the President's residence is located, and might have been used by mutinous troops for sniping purposes."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland.

As soon as we pass through the gateway, a radiant vista stretches before us. At our feet lies the Nan Hai or "Southern Sea" with the fairy island of the Ying T'ai (Ocean Terrace) floating on it, and beyond the stately succession of Winter Palace roofs shining in the sunlight.

Like the builders of Versailles, the Mings knew instinctively how to compose a landscape. They understood the charm of surprise and contrast. They appreciated the value of artificial water—a characteristic shared indeed by all Chinese whose very word for a landscape is a composite of hill and water—"shan shui." Yung Loh enlarged the small ponds dug under the Chins into the Three Seas—the Southern Sea, the Middle Sea and the Northern Sea—and henceforth the palaces bordering them were known as the "Sea Palaces."

Along the eastern shore of the Nan Hai runs a paved walk with small artificial hillocks on the outer side from one of which, rumour says, the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi watched the fires in the city on the fateful night of 13th June 1900. The first buildings to be seen are insignificant, interesting only for their picturesque doors and windows shaped like vases, leaves, tea pots, fans, etc., such shapes being peculiar to Chinese architecture when thus employed. Some of the carved brickwork here is delightful, the material being treated with peculiar delicacy and feeling.

Close by is the boat house where the state barges are kept. They were used almost daily in the time of Tz'ü Hsi who was so fond of water excursions that she once

gave orders to stop the bombardment of the Legations in order to enjoy her picnic undisturbed by the noise of guns. To this day the cumbersome barges are sometimes pressed into service and convey guests across the lake when the President gives a garden party. The rowers standing to their oars are a survival of a régime when no subject could sit in the presence of Majesty.

On the right of the boat house a curious wall-less pavilion is built over a spring that trickles slowly through stones carved like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. This intricate arrangement of the rocks is specially made in order to impede a rapid flow for, fond as the Chinese are of introducing water in the form of lakes and pools into their gardens, they do not care for quick flowing water especially near dwellings.⁴⁹

Beyond the spring we come to the island, for all its beauty a place of melancholy memories. Here, in this gilded prison, the Emperor Kuang Hsü found his St. Helena. The eunuchs set to guard him were changed daily, lest they grow to sympathise with the unhappy monarch and devise some means for his liberation, and daily when his gaolers were removed, the drawbridge connecting the island with the mainland was drawn up, leaving the Emperor to wander through the courts of his palace prison or sit on the southern terrace where it

⁴⁹ Giles says: "Old-fashioned Chinese still think that a running stream carries good luck away with it, and I have heard of houses in the hill-country which, because they happen to be near a rapid brook, are rented at reduced prices."

overlooks the lotus lake, waiting, hoping, perhaps expecting that his last appeal to K'ang Yu-wei might bring forth some fruit—waiting for two long years after his fatal *coup d'état* of 1898.

When the Court returned to Peking in 1902, His Majesty lived here again but under less restraint and, probably owing to his timid and retiring disposition, by his own choice. At all events it was here that he died. The room where he “mounted the dragon and ascended on high” is shown—a small alcove-chamber such as Chinese sleeping rooms, even those of monarchs, generally are. But it has the unusual addition of large glass windows, and we can imagine how this frail and melancholy failure gazed through them with pleasure to the last on his little world of beauty, perfect in its dwarf proportions, and bright with a colour and variety of roof tiles unusual even among Peking palaces.

Not far from the island are the famous rock-gardens. They appeal more to Chinese taste than to ours except in the late spring time, season of peonies, when the pinks and reds of the “King of Flowers” show in brilliant contrast against the grey stones and make the place particularly attractive.⁵⁰ On warm summer days the dark galleries give a grateful shade and coolness even during the hours of greatest heat.

The most important buildings of the Sea Palaces are near these gardens. To reach them we cross the zig-zag

⁵⁰ Some of the plants are hundreds of years old.

bridge called the "Bridge of Ten Thousand Years." Its galleries with their daintily carved railings form interlaced swastikas, symbols of luck and longevity, as they wind to and fro across the water. Such galleries, which are much appreciated by the Chinese, also exist in the Summer Palace, in the gardens of officials, even in temple grounds, and their purpose is to supply a sheltered promenade for taking the air during the rainy season.

A building near by arouses our curiosity by its blatant newness. The white marble walls, the bright red doors studded with gilt knobs, the carved balustrades copied from the Temple of Heaven, are things of yesterday, too modern for their faded neighbours—the quaint twin *t'ing'rhs* with double roofs of soft blue tiles. The Dictator Yuan Shih-k'ai erected this tabernacle to contain the "golden casket" (simply a gilded safe) in which he placed the three names of the candidates for his succession. How significant that he, a Republican President, should have followed the precedent of an Emperor, the great K'ang Hsi, who likewise made no public choice of an heir but hid the name of the one to come after him in a sealed coffer which he secreted behind the Imperial tablet!

Under a gnarled wisteria vine that for uncounted years has braved winds and snows and answered joyously the first call of spring, our road leads on to the Empress Dowager's private theatre, built over water in order to soften the voices of the actors. The stage is small, which gives the place an air of cosy intimacy absent from other palace playhouses. The actors' dressing rooms are tiny.

The furnishings are simple. Only the royal box is large and imposing with the huge plate glass windows painted with the five "lucky bats." In fact it is in no sense a box, as we understand the word, but a room. Nobody could possibly sit in one of the cramped cubby-holes we occupy at the play, if that play lasted for three days as Chinese dramas sometimes do. Nor could he sit through it continuously at all. Hence the necessity for plenty of space for the spectators. Hence the Imperial custom of giving intermittent attention to the stage, and retiring into the side alcoves of a commodious loge for a meal, a siesta, or the transaction of state business.

Every nook and corner of the Sea Palaces is so closely associated with the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, the extraordinary woman who kept the Imperial system together by her political sagacity and the strength of her remarkable personality for 50 years, that we seem to forget, when wandering through them, the earlier owners. It is her individuality which dominates. This was the place she loved (far better than the stately precincts of the Winter Palace) and, loving, made her own. Throughout the buildings and the gardens, like inextricable bright threads, the romantic traditions of her pleasures and her passions lend meaning and unity to all we look upon.

Across the oblong strip of water, so like a Venetian canal, the waiting room of the President of the Republic seems incongruous. We merely glance at the finely carved ceiling, at the floor paved with squares of marble, alternate

black and white, and hurry on, catching a glimpse as we pass of the foreign-style building in which the Chief Executive and his family live.

Why should such an architectural monstrosity be allowed in the midst of the exquisite Chinese buildings? The answer is "A woman's whim," and the woman again is no other than Tz'ü Hsi.

The first time she found it politic to receive the ladies of the Diplomatic Corps, her own apartments were thrown open to them. But the guests, whose rough Western manners failed to measure up to her own exquisite standards, offended Her Majesty by fingering the draperies and curios. "Henceforth," she declared, as she ordered everything they had touched removed from her sight, "these clumsy barbarians shall be entertained in their own vulgar surroundings, not in my home." That is why she, an artist to her finger tips and a lover of beauty in all its forms, deliberately caused this house of ugliness to be built.

Following her favourite walk along the shore (where once a light railway ran)⁵¹ we reach Tz'ü Hsi's private pavilions.

In front of them stands a Spirit Screen or "Wall of Respect," such as one sees before the entrance of nearly every Chinese house or temple to ward off evil influences,

⁵¹ It was built with the Empress Dowager's consent by certain progressive officials who wanted her support for some railway scheme. They got the desired permission for the line outside the palace but were told promptly to remove the one inside, as the puffing of the engine annoyed Her Majesty.

but exceptionally fine, with landscapes carved in brick. The main gateway is guarded by two cloisonné lions more valuable and curious than beautiful. The small marble obelisk near them is worthy of notice. An inscription upon it says: "Set up to mark the opening of the first parliament in China." But the date on the stone is only four months before Yuan Shih-k'ai dissolved that parliament, and from the small size of the monument erected by him, one guesses that the Dictator was not over-anxious to advertise a necessary commemoration.

The Empress Dowager herself built the palace beyond the lions for her own use, and Yuan Shih-k'ai added the hideous modern hall, sometimes used for receptions to foreigners, by roofing over the large courtyard in front of her Throne Room. The latter now forms a kind of dais to the new building—a stage divided and subdivided by carvings of rich brown sandal wood which, in addition to their lacy loveliness, spread a warm and delicious perfume. The frames of the round openings in these partitions are sometimes six inches thick, yet they are carved completely through with extraordinary richness and variety of design *different on both sides*.

In this regal setting the Old Buddha, as Tz'ü Hsi is to this day affectionately called in her capital, went to join her ancestors, and there is something singularly dramatic in the story of her passing. Ill and worn, feeling that the shadow of Death was already falling upon her, this indomitable woman insisted on rising from a sick bed to give audience to the Dalai Lama. Seated on her throne

in the immobile hieratic pose, her ceremonial robes falling about her in statuesque undulations, she impersonated for the last time all the dignity of her mighty ancestors as the doors were thrown open and the Buddhist Pope, in his gorgeous yellow vestments, entered and bowed before her. But the solemn silence was broken by a deep sigh, and the proud head of the woman who had attempted to dominate death fell back. The terrified eunuchs scattered. All feared a sudden tragedy, yet none dared to verify their fears . . . until the Dalai Lama himself mounted the dais and confirmed them. "Look," whispered the frightened witnesses, "the mouth remains open. It is a sign that the spirit is unwilling to leave the body and take its departure for the Place of the Nine Springs." Only the day before her miserable nephew Kuang Hsü had breathed his last, and the Old Buddha had indeed many reasons to wish to remain a little longer on the tottering throne of her dynasty.

This story of Tz'ü Hsi's end, though commonly believed, may or may not be true. At least it grips the imagination powerfully, and the memory of the scene, as courtiers describe it, lingers with us as we leave the place and wander along the lake to the last important building of the Sea Palaces, the Tzü Kuang Ko, or Throne Hall of Purple Effulgence. Originally built by one of the Ming emperors to receive his Mongol subjects, it became known as the Hall of the Mongol Princes, but was generally used for the reception of all strangers, including Western diplomats until 1900. From the marble of its balustrades

to the pointed eaves that trim it like a rich valance, the whole structure was cleverly calculated to impress the envoys before they entered the presence of Majesty. Pausing at the foot of the broad steps that form a dignified approach, even the casual visitor to-day is thrilled. How much more then those who mounted them between brilliant ranks of kneeling nobles, and surrounded by picturesque men-at-arms!

The Hall itself is a vast lofty apartment 40 or 50 feet high. Its bare simplicity increases the effect of grandeur. The eye, undistracted by secondary ornament, instinctively seeks the platform with its two curious black marble tablets inscribed with Manchu and Chinese characters, and the splendid throne of archaic design carved and gilded.⁵²

Through a gate behind the Tzū Kuang Ko, we pass out of the Sea Palace grounds and cross the road at the base of the Marble Bridge to enter the Pei Hai, a separately walled enclosure, divided from them by a broad street which continues as a causeway or bridge (built in 1392) across the lake. The Chinese poetically call this the "Jade Rainbow Bridge," for scholars refer to it as the point from which hangs the Great Jade Rainbow, whereas the lake beyond is known as the "Golden Sea" or "Great

⁵² When the President gives a reception, a collection of Imperial portraits is sometimes shown in this building. Those of the older dynasties with the exception of one or two Sung originals, are, of course, comparatively recent copies, as some of them purport to be authentic likenesses of sovereigns who reigned 3,000 to 2,000 B.C. The magnificence of the Ming pictures where the emperors appear in brilliant yellow robes, is positively dazzling.

Secreted Pond." Unfortunately this bridge has been divided lengthwise by a wall, built by Yuan Shih-k'ai, that spoils a complete view of all three lakes. Still, from the half of the bridge open to traffic, passers by get a pretty vista of the northern lake and of the Circular Throne Hall, or Ch'eng Kuang Tien, surrounded by crenelated walls, at the eastern end. This is said to have been a throne hall of the Mongol dynasty but is probably older, as Father Hyacinth Bitchurin, writing in 1829, speaks of seeing a white-barked pine tree distinguishable by its size, which was one of three planted here by the Chins (A.D. 1125-1234).

The Ch'eng Kuang Tien is closed to visitors. No matter. Who would not rather read Marco Polo's and Friar Odoric's descriptions⁵³ of the palace of the Great Khan—"the most beautiful palace in the whole world,"—than see it now shorn of splendour? Within the outer ramparts, whitewashed in Mongol days, were several buildings with glazed tile roofs and dragon entwined columns. The walls of the main rooms were covered with yellow cat, the floors with black sable, and in the ante-chambers were curtains of white sable and ermine interspersed with hangings of rich red leather. Kublai Khan's own apartments, where he died in February 1294, were entirely of "tzü-t'an," a precious hardwood "carved to the fineness of cobwebs." But the throne hall was more splendid still, decorated with

⁵³ *The Book of Ser Marco Polo; Cathay and the Way Thither*, by Yule-Cordier.

different coloured marbles and shining with jewels, while the throne itself was draped with cloth of gold and inlaid with precious stones. A clepsydra of gold and pearls marked the time, a little figure appearing before the dial to announce the hour for the great feasts.⁵⁴

Now silver trumpets blare to herald the entry of the Khan among the guests he delights to honour. Those who serve him wear silken kerchiefs bound over their mouths and nostrils "so that no breath nor odour from their persons shall taint the dish or the goblet presented to the Lord." Whenever he raises his cup to drink, there is a burst of music, and the assembled company bows low before the Emperor as he quaffs his wine. In his day none blushed to be thirsty, and the huge pearl-tasselled jade vessel, standing "two paces in height, and exceeding the value of four great towns," is emptied from golden goblets by the feasting, laughing, be-jewelled crowd, as fast as pipes bring the liquor flowing into it. Then the mechanical peacocks are sent for, and the Tartars "to amuse their Lord," as Odoric says in his quaint phrases, "go one after the other and clap their hands; upon which the peacocks flap their wings, and make as if they would dance. Now this must be done either by diabolic art, or by some engine underground."

⁵⁴ Was this perhaps the clepsydra, crowned by a lofty porcelain tower, which the "Beggars Emperor" Hung Wu of the Ming dynasty had razed to the ground to remove an evidence of useless waste? "If the Mongols, instead of amusing themselves with these trifles," said he, "had applied their energies to the task of contenting the people, would they not have preserved the sceptre in their family?"—(Boulger).

After the feast, the noble host and his courtiers adjourn to conceive and meditate of pleasant things in the gardens. Some wander through the wooded park (in the Pei Hai), caressing the tame deer,⁵⁵ "also the white stags and fallow deer, gazelles and roebucks, and fine squirrels of various sorts"—(Marco Polo). Others, poetically inclined, gather in the pavilions at the edge of the lakes where, "midst such multitudes of wild geese, and ducks, and swans that it is something to wonder at," the lotuses float, lazily grand, with their dense growth of leather-like leaves and solitary blossoms rising above them in majestic isolation—the very embodiment of the drowsy summer air, the very essence of repose. The philosophers of the company seek the seclusion of the temple courts beyond, where the peace of centuries already seems to brood, and where the cicadae climb the cypresses to clash their tiny cymbals in the sun, or dragon-flies haunt the holy silence of the lily ponds with a soundless flicker of emerald and gold.

Kublai Khan and his hard drinking, hard fighting followers, who ended by loving this golden ease too much, are long since dust. But the romance of their luxurious age still clings around the Pei Hai, as the memory of Tz'ü Hsi's splendid revels still seems to animate the Nan Hai. Around this "Northern Sea," the oldest part of the Imperial plaisance whose beginnings date back to the days of the Norman Conquest of England, hangs a gentle shadow of decay adding a note of pathos to their beauty.

⁵⁵These were still to be found in the Pei Hai under the early Manchu Emperors (*Russia, Mongolia, China* by Baddeley)

The five pavilions of the western shore—the Wu Lung T'ing (built in 1460) praised by poets, the crumbling temples beyond, the peaceful enclosure of the Monastery of Ch'ang Fu Ssü, the grass grown ruins of the Sanscrit Printing Press with tablets quaintly inscribed, the Altar of the Silkworms dedicated to the Empress supposed to have taught their culture to the Chinese people 4,500 years ago, the huge Buddha⁵⁶ in the Wan Fo Lou (larger and finer than the giant statue in the Lama Temple), the Hsiao Hsi Tien or "Little Western Heaven," with its broken images, amidst model hills and valleys representing the Paradise of the gentle Buddha Amitaba where those who have deserved happy immortality revel in perpetual youth, the beautiful Porcelain Dragon Wall⁵⁷ that stands in a rank growth of dandelions and wild thyme facing the ugly, grey gate to a bare playground for the sons of Yuan Shih-k'ai—all these old buildings and monuments appear as haunted precincts asleep like the enchanted palaces of some fairy-tale, silent and deserted since those who built and enjoyed them ceased to be.

To analyse the charm of this forgotten corner of the Pei Hai, where few visitors penetrate, is impossible. It is a savour that must be tasted, a perfume inhaled, a colour seen with our own eyes. It is in the reflection of willow branches in the lake. It is in the grey stone

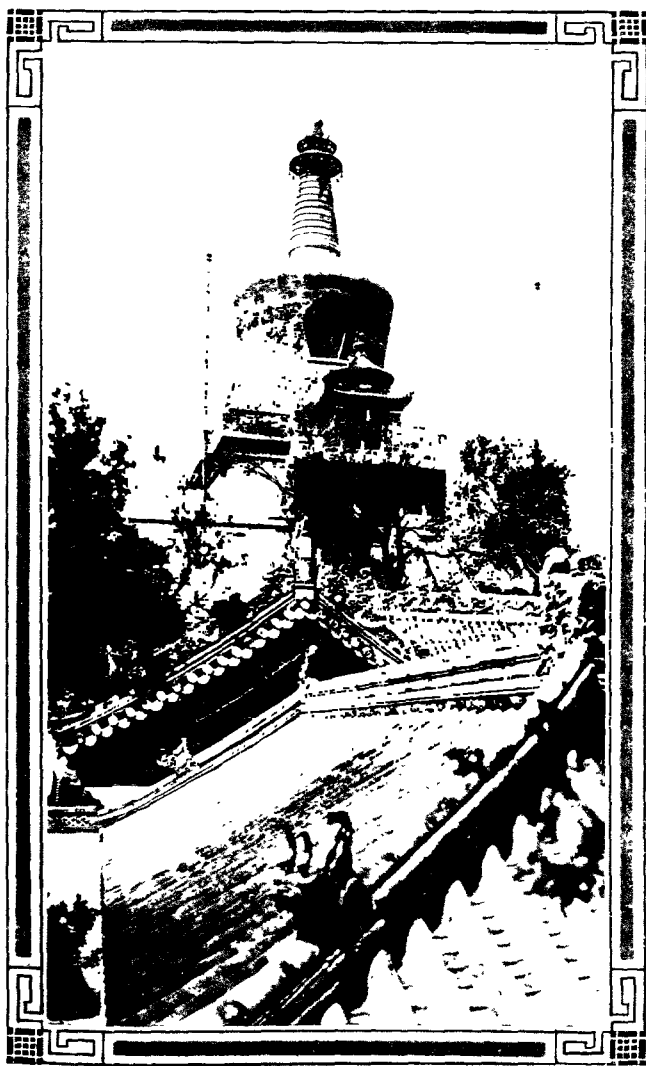
⁵⁶ It was destroyed by fire in 1919.

⁵⁷ This Porcelain Wall with its many coloured dragons, fired and carved in high relief, disporting themselves on a ground of blue rocks and green sea waves, is unique as a work of art. It served originally as a "Spirit Screen" to a temple, but all traces of this building have disappeared.

embankments writhing like dragons along the shores. It is in the flight of ducks towards the south, the song of frogs in the rushes. It is in the flowing weeds creeping to caress the broken marble balustrades and the tender shrubs pushing their way through a yellow roof. It is in the shadows of the tiles on blue waters, and the purple tints of crows' wings on mauve gateways. It is in the solitary heron standing in the sunset on a rock, motionless as a bronze figure upon his pedestal. It is the remembrance of the past staring at us wistfully, and the desolation of the present softly veiled by gilded dust.

Across the lake rises the hill crowned by the Pai T'a, or White Dagoba, the *palladium* of the Middle Kingdom; a mighty monument glowing like a phantom lotus bud in the sunshine. There is a pretty old tradition about this hill. Once a miraculous mountain in Mongolia, known as the Hill of Bliss, its possession assured supreme power. A monarch of the T'ang dynasty offered a princess of his family as a bride to an Uigur prince in exchange for it. The offer was accepted. But the mountain was large and difficult to transport. The Chinese, however, prayed to the God of Hindrances and Obstacles, whose face is dark. Then they built a fire around the hill and poured vinegar over it, whereupon like Cleopatra's pearl, it dissolved, and the pieces were easily removed to China.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ As a matter of fact this mound, like the Coal Hill, was probably the result of the excavations from the lakes. The Mongols carried a stream up to the top of the mound by primitive pumping machinery—a stream which poured from a dragon's mouth into a square basin. Their fountain has, however, long since disappeared.



"WHITE DAGOBA"—PEI HAI.

Scarcely less poetic is the story of the buildings that have stood on this enchanted height. Long, long ago in the days of the Liaos, the famous Empress Hsiao, the same who built the now ruined temple of Po Wang Shan on the eastern spur of the Western Hills, erected here a little palace known as the "Powder Tower." But the vanities of women gave place to the chanting of monks when, by order of Genghis Khan, the site was handed over for a monastery to Ch'iu (Ch'ang Ch'un), the holy Taoist teacher (buried at Po Yün Kuan) whom he summoned to his Court to advise him on government and religion.

The present Dagoba was built by the Emperor Shun Chih in A.D. 1652 when the first Thibetan Pontiff to be confirmed in the title of Dalai Lama came to Peking and, probably as a delicate compliment to the illustrious guest, the form chosen was that of the Buddhist "chortens," or reliquaries, common throughout Mongolia and Thibet, which symbolise by their five sections—base, body, spire, ornament and gilded ball—the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether.

It is visible from any part of the city and from its terrace we look down on what is certainly the most beautiful view in Peking where so many views are beautiful. The ascent is steep. But we are repaid for our fatigue at every platform where we halt for breath. Here we find a temple with a quaint group of prostrate bronze figures representing the demon leaders of heretical sects held down at the command of Buddha by geese, symbols of tameness and timidity, and other animals. Yonder

we stand to admire a graceful *p'ai lou*. Further up, we get a glimpse of roofs with vari-coloured tiles set in patterns. Then one last flight of steps and we reach the highest platform with the shrine of a triple-headed, many-handed lamaist idol with a necklace of skulls, and behind it, higher, much higher, the huge bulb of the Dagoba towers, larger than all anticipation. The Chinese have a superstition that it casts no shadow to the west, but on the east this weird mass of naked brickwork, so un-Chinese in shape, is mirrored in the lakes which lie like uncut sapphires at our feet.

Now looking down from this height we take our last and loveliest view of all the palaces drowsing in serene sublimity. Forms remain sharply outlined, yet are idealised by distance. Colours blend together. Buildings appear among the trees where we have no reason to expect them. Fantastic roof shapes surprise and delight. Shaggy cypresses stand like bent old courtiers bowing in the breeze, and the far peaks of the hills beyond turn their blue shoulders towards us.

Reluctant to leave this vision of loveliness we slowly descend the stone steps, cross the graceful marble bridge, and make our way towards the Coal Hill which, in an enclosure of its own, stands north of the north gate of the Forbidden City, the Shen Wu Mên.

On our way along the moat, perfumed and panoplied with lotuses in their season, we pass an enclosure with a series of stately *p'ai lous* and yellow-tiled pavilions with most elaborate peaked roofs. The blue-tiled sanc-

tuary behind them is the Ta Kao Hsüan Tien, or Temple of the Most High, a beautiful temple built in 1550. Originally it was a palace where the girls chosen to serve at Court were taught etiquette "and the various arts respectable for their sex." "Every seventh day of the seventh moon," says Father Hyacinth, "they present the results of their skill for the inspection of the Emperor." How many a timid heart fluttered like the doves in the eaves when the day came for the inspection of the Master! How many a humble maiden began within these walls the career which was the reward of beauty and ambition! When the main hall was transformed into a temple to Yü Huang, the "Jade Emperor" (the supreme Taoist divinity acknowledged as such by the Sung dynasty and identified as Shang Ti with God by the common people), the emperors came here for the more serious purpose of praying for rain in time of drought. The images they worshipped disappeared in 1900 when foreign soldiery were quartered in the precincts of the disgraced Yü Huang, tutelar deity of the Boxers. The keys of this interesting place of such varied associations are in charge of the Manchu household, and it is only opened a few times in the year for the princes delegated to burn incense—never for casual visitors.

The Shrine of the Most High trims, so to speak, the foot of the Coal Hill on the western side, as the Shou Huang Tien, an ancestral hall, where portraits of deceased emperors were exposed and where their bodies lay awaiting burial, completes it on the northern side.

Like the Hill of the White Dagoba, the Coal Hill is no accident of nature, but an artificial mound older than the pretty pavilions crowning its five peaks.⁵⁹ The early Mongol emperors built it for reasons which are still disputed; some say it was an earthwork constructed in order to ward off the evil influences of the North from the Imperial precincts; others declare it to be of coal (whence its name) for use as a provision in case of siege; others again dispute this, and believe it to have been planned simply as a watch tower for the city and the palaces, while many think it was simply an Imperial plaisaunce.

Doubtless there is truth in all these theories. The example of storing coal in a mound behind Imperial palaces was set by the emperor of the T'ang dynasty at Hsi An Fu in Shensi, many centuries before the warlike Mongol era. The idea of combating influences is older still, while the origin of pleasure parks with artificial hills dates back as far as human desire for enjoyment and variety.

Whatever the original purpose of its builder, the fame of this tree-covered hillock, with the airy summer houses placed upon it by Chia Ching in the sixteenth century, spread far. Entranced by the descriptions of

⁵⁹ Permits obtainable through the Legations are required to visit the Coal Hill which is closed to the general public because from its summit visitors can look down on the palaces still occupied by the deposed Emperor Hsüan T'ung and his attendants.

her Ambassadors, the Russian Empress Catherine the Second ordered that one of these structures be copied for the grounds of her palace at Tsarskoe Selo.

In Chinese minds, the Coal Hill is intimately associated with the tragic death of the last Ming sovereign. Here he ended his troubled career together with that of his dynasty. As dawn was breaking on the day of doom, "the emperor changed his apparel and removed his long Imperial robe. The bell rang in the palace for the morning audience but none attended. The emperor then donned a short dragon-embroidered tunic and a robe of purple and yellow, and his left foot was bare. Accompanied by one faithful eunuch, Wang Ch'eng-en, he left the palace by the gate of Divine Military Prowess and entered the Coal Hill enclosure. Gazing sorrowfully upon the city he wrote on the lapel of his sleeve a valedictory decree: 'I, feeble and of small virtue, have offended against Heaven: the rebels have seized my capital because my ministers deceived me. Ashamed to face my ancestors, I die. Removing my Imperial cap and with my hair dishevelled about my face I leave to the rebels the dismemberment of my body. Let them not harm my people.' Then he strangled himself in the pavilion known as the Imperial Hat and Girdle Department and the faithful eunuch did likewise."60

⁶⁰ *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland. The usual account that he hanged himself to a tree is thus incorrect, though until lately the chain he was supposed to have used was suspended to one of the pines.

It was one of the quaintest pranks of that incorrigible jester Fate that Ch'ung Cheng's end came to him on the scene of his pleasures. More sinned against than sinning, he struggled manfully for years to build a government on a substantial foundation, changing his prime ministers 47 times in his despairing efforts. But towards the last he was reduced to palace eunuchs as advisers and these corrupt "rats and foxes" demoralised the Court. Extravagant pleasures alone appealed to them, and the Coal Hill became in their day much what the Petit Trianon was in the thoughtless, reckless times of Marie Antoinette. "Après nous le déluge" was as much the motto of one régime as of the other. Courtiers, careless of duty, idled their time away on this Pleasure Hill under the trees whose leaves, when the sun shone on them, looked like emeralds from the treasury of some tributary king. Eunuchs reclining upon rich carpets with silken cushions to support their elbows, amused themselves by painting, or, summoning their attendants with tablets of writing-ink and brushes, inscribed upon a flat stone conveniently near, verses in praise of some famous Court beauty :

"Like floating clouds her silken robes,
Like swaying willow-boughs her grace.
But may I even dare compare,
The dazzling sunshine to her face."

The ladies of the seraglio, wearied of their embroidery or of performing upon their reed flutes, likewise came with mincing steps and swaying grace to while away the interminable hours of their idle lives in the park.

There was often a whispering of silks, a weight of perfumes in the summer houses, or the titter of soft laughter as the painted damsels peeped through latticed windows or screens of leaves down on the roadway below the wall, the Street of Everyday Life that skirted the Imperial Pleasure Hill. With proud indifference yet with childish curiosity these favourites of fortune, who thought the main business of living should be laughter, fun and happiness, watched the hungry beggars crying for coppers to passers by, watched the carts toiling through the dust. No doubt they pitied the insignificant and humble traveller in his dull blues and grays. Not for such as he the sumptuous splendour of yellows and reds, the richness of dragon robes, the lordly magnificence of pleasure parks. Then one day an Imperial edict, written upon perfumed yellow silk, commanded a Court painter to decorate the walls of a pavilion. The painter hastened to the palace immediately, brush in hand, prepared to begin his work. A prince received him courteously. "Serve us well and we shall know how to reward you," he said. "Meanwhile, have you any requests to make? What models do you desire, O famous painter?" For in the imagination of the prince, the picture was to be of some gorgeous court pageant.

But the Master advanced slowly to the doorway of the pavilion and pointed out the city at his feet, the gate towers, the temples, the trees, the carts, the horses and mules, the men and women passing by.

"These Your Highness," he made answer, "are my models."

"But this is not beauty, only drab monotony."

"Pardon, Your Highness—this is life."

And the prince, turning thoughtfully away, let the artist have his will.

CHAPTER VI

THE MUSEUM AND THE WINTER PALACE.

AS the Forbidden City had been closed for centuries, it was a startling innovation when the strip between the Wu Mên and the T'ai Ho Mên was thrown open. This was done after the establishment of the Republic by Yuan Shih-k'ai who transformed the old Halls of Audience for military officials into an art museum. The corresponding buildings on the east were formerly reserved for the reception of civil officials.⁶¹ A part of them—known as the Ch'uan Hsin Tien—is now used for an exhibition of scrolls and pictures, or special displays of the priceless Gobelin tapestries, presented by Louis XVI. to Ch'ien Lung, the curious portrait of the "K'o" Concubine in Italian armour, painted by the Jesuit

⁶¹ The superiority of civil over military officials in the eyes of the Chinese is shown by the fact that the Palace halls designated for the latter are on the west, or right side, of the Forbidden City (facing south), whereas those used by the former are on the east, or left side, the left being the place of honour.

Castiglione,⁶² and a collection of beautiful Chinese furniture.

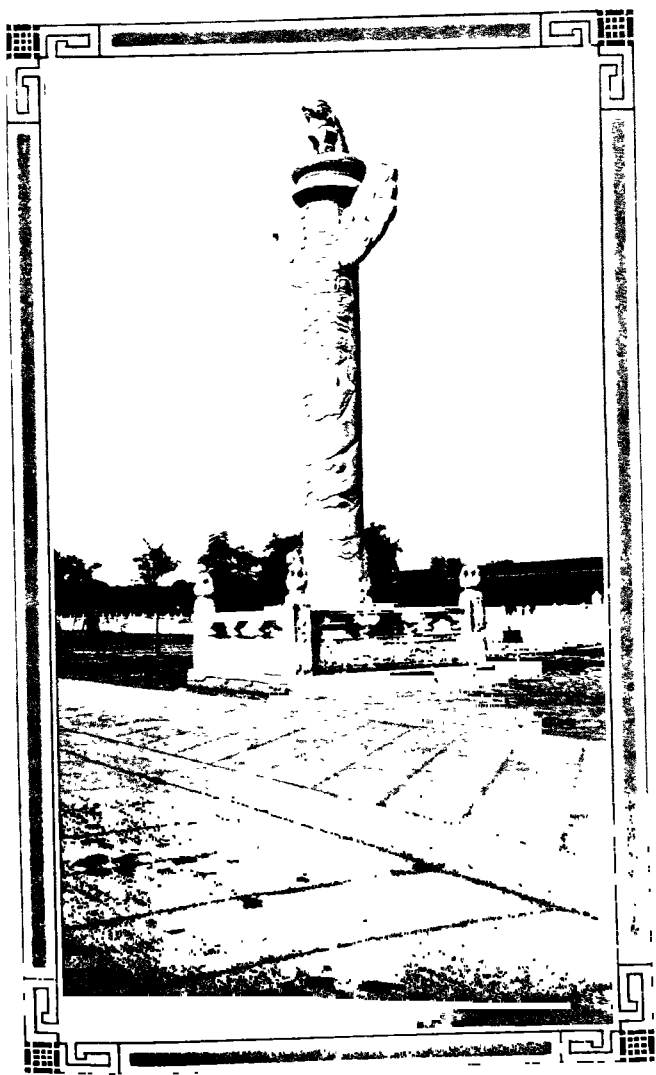
Visitors to the museum are admitted (on payment of a small fee) by either the Hsi Hua Mên (West Gate Glorious), or the Tung Hua Mên (East Gate Glorious). It is better to enter by the Hsi Hua Mên, which is nearest to the exhibition buildings, then cross the impressive courtyards to the east, visit the Winter Palace halls and leave by the Tung Hua Mên.

Note the remarkable fact that this museum owes none of its masterpieces to foreign lands; its treasures, gathered at Jehol and Mukden by the Manchu sovereigns, and covering the whole range of art—except sculpture—are all the work of Chinese craftsmen.

The exhibits are displayed in three halls, which are so crowded that a superficial visit can be made in an hour or two,⁶³ though a careful study of the bronzes alone would require many days. Outwardly picturesque, these palace pavilions have been admirably adapted within to

⁶² "The Chinese point of view on pictorial art differs essentially from the Western, and the wide abyss which parts them is proved by the career of the two Jesuits Attiret and Castiglione who were attached as painters to the Imperial Court in the eighteenth century and tried unsuccessfully to make the Chinese accept European art with its science of anatomy, its modelling, its effects of light and shade. . . . When Lord Macartney came 50 years later bringing with him several pictures as presents from George III., the mandarins in waiting were shocked by the shadows, and they asked gravely if the originals of the portraits really had one side of the face darker than the other; the shaded nose was a grave defect in their eyes, and some of them believed that it had come there accidentally."—Bushell.

⁶³ Western readers may form some idea of the worth of this collection from the simple statement that a minimum valuation of \$30,000,000 has been placed upon it by experts.



"PILLAR OF VICTORY"—ENTRANCE TO THE WINTER PALACE

their present purpose.⁶⁴ The lighting is softened by open-work wooden screens which cover the long windows like patterns of crimson frost. The show-cases are roped off in such a way that visitors are guided for a complete tour of the works of art. These foreign connoisseurs assisted the Chinese to arrange in a suitable manner, but unfortunately, owing to want of space, some of the porcelains and bronzes are too high, or too far from the ropes to be seen properly. The greatest drawback to the enjoyment of the collection, however, is the lack of a catalogue in a foreign language, though each piece is marked with a card giving its date in Chinese.⁶⁵

Passing through the central doorway of the museum, (where an additional fee is charged) we enter a small separate pavilion on the right containing cloisonné. The art of cloisonné making was originally introduced into China from the West, hence its name "fa-lan" or Western work, and it is one of the few crafts in which the Chinese do not greatly excel. In fact, this is the weakest part of the whole display. Artistic pieces are the exception, not the rule. Some of the older Ming examples are elegant enough — of an unusual blue-green colour — the shade turquoises get if you wash them. But the models of

⁶⁴ The only discordant note in this group of buildings is a hideous red fire-proof storehouse designed by a German architect. This contains things for which there is no room in the museum.

⁶⁵ The reader who is interested in Chinese art treasures will find much general information that will help him to a proper appreciation of all Chinese collections in *L'Art Chinois*, by M. Paléologue; *Chinese Art Handbook*, by Bushell; *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, by Hobson; *History of Chinese Pictorial Art*, by H. A. Giles.

pagodas and dagobas, often of great size and pretensions, are inferior Ch'ien Lung manufacture, neither of great beauty nor value, although the best things of the kind produced at that period. The carved blackwood tables which bear them are much more to be admired.

In the small stands along the walls we find many curious things, such as the half-vases which the Chinese use to hold flowers for mural decoration in their reception rooms, their sedan chairs, and even modern broughams. Also a collection of incense burners and wine cups, among them some grotesque animal shapes. Strange how these old artists could fashion a cow wrongly foreshortened and yet give the exact impression of its queer, crooked, lumbering motion, or a horse anatomically monstrous, yet unmistakably spirited!

The large main hall facing the gate is full of various treasures. On the old throne platform fine specimens of antique bronze are shown against a background of pictures. A large vitrine on the right contains some famous *sang de boeuf* (lang-yao), one luminous crimson vase being specially remarkable—as fine, or nearly, as the famous piece in the Morgan library. The wonderful red of these pieces is accounted for by a legend. In ancient days a famous potter received from the emperor an order to make vases the colour of blood. Nine and forty times, with purpose unmoved, did he seek to fulfil the Imperial command. Vainly did he consume his substance, vainly did he expend his strength, vainly did he exhaust his knowledge. For seven days and nights he fed his

furnaces, like another Bernard de Palissy, with all his possessions, while his workmen watched with him the wondrous vases crystallising into being, rose-lighted by the breath of the flame. "Now upon the eighth night," say the old chronicles, "the potter bade all his weary comrades retire to rest, for that the work was well-nigh done, and the success assured. 'If you find me not here at sunrise,' he warned them, 'fear not to take forth the vases: for I know that the task will have been accomplished according to the command of the August.' So they departed. But in that same eighth night the potter entered the fire and yielded up his ghost in the embrace of the Spirit of the Furnace, giving his life for the life of his work, his soul for the soul of his vases. And when the workmen came upon the ninth morning, even the bones of the potter had ceased to be, but lo! the vases lived and glowed with the colour of blood." (See *Some Chinese Ghosts*, by Lafcadio Hearn).

Near the *sang de boeuf* are some fine *flambés*, interesting to compare with the earlier Chün Chou ware. The beauty of the *flambés* depending upon a certain process of firing and re-firing, but few potters ever succeeded in marrying the colours together harmoniously. "The first results were no doubt accidental, though later experience gave certainty to the master-minds of the artists, who were then able to define and measure the combination of the various metallic oxides which would give exactly the coloration desired." The Chinese call these various splashed or mottled glazes "yao pien," but

the better known French name *flammé* or *flambé* is derived from the curious, yet very beautiful, veinings, like flames of fire.⁶⁶

Against the east wall are cases of red and polychromatic lacquers, dating chiefly from the reign of Ch'ien Lung, and nowadays much copied. For these the artist required infinite patience rather than power, and a painstaking capacity to work out a minute exactness in detail day after day for weeks together, laying on one coat after another (never less than three, nor more than 18) on the thin wood foundation, spreading it equally, then, while the varnish was still warm, carving it with a sharp knife. The Emperor Ch'ien Lung had a special fancy for this carved lacquer. All kinds of objects were made for him at the palace factories, such as large screens (*fêng-p'ing*) with 12 folds eight feet high, spacious divans (*ch'uang*) fitted with small tables, larger tables and chairs of formal outline for reception halls, in addition to a variety of smaller objects, useful and ornamental.

Wonderful as they are, these too brilliant lacquers end by wearying the eye. It is a rest and delight to turn from them to the near by exhibit of Sung porcelain known as "ting-yao," made at Ting Chou in the province of Chihli, though the visitor, fresh from the feast of rich and glowing colour, may at first experience a chill before its sobriety, cold intellectuality and severe classic reserve. This ware of delicate resonant body, invested with a soft-looking fluent glaze of ivory-white tone in the variety

⁶⁶ *Chats on Oriental China*, by J. F. Blacker.

known as "pai-ting," or of a yellowish, clayey tint, in that called "t'u-ting," is probably more common in collections than any other of the Sung wares. "The bowls and dishes," says Bushell, "were often fired bottom upwards and the delicate rims, left unglazed, were afterwards mounted with copper to preserve them from injury. Some were clothed in plain white, the glaze collecting outside in tear drops; others were engraved at the point in the paste with ornamental patterns; a third class was impressed inside with intricate and elaborate designs in pronounced relief, the principal ornamental motives being the tree peony, lily flowers and flying phoenixes."

It is rather disappointing that none of these master-pieces are signed. But the name of the potter is rarely attached to his work in China, as it is in Japan. Custom required from the individual artist, who must begrudge no pains for perfection, a self discipline sufficiently strong to allow him to merge his personality in a "school" which was distinguished as a whole by its style, tradition and tendency.

In the passage leading from one building to the other hang a few tapestry pictures, remarkable for their rich blue tones, and very artistically framed. These are lovely specimens, but the picture exhibit as a whole is scanty and unimportant. The red lacquer throne chair of Ch'ien Lung, the yellow embroidered screen elegantly framed in gold lacquer, the inlaid tables and the case of enamel sceptres (*ju-yi*) strike the eye at once.

The small glass cases contain the most valuable porcelains in the Museum. Specially worthy of notice are the priceless aubergine pieces of the Sung period, and an example of brownish ware, a flower jar dated Hsien Têh (A.D. 954-959), unique of its kind and one of the oldest pieces of Chinese porcelain that have come down to us intact.⁶⁷ Undoubtedly this vase owes its preservation for a thousand years to its thickness; all the more delicate "ch'ai-yao," "thin as paper and clear as a mirror," have long since disappeared, so that we must be content with the literary evidence of Imperial rescripts to prove their existence.

Remarkable also is a sea-green celadon tea-pot⁶⁸ in perfect condition with a beautifully luminous glaze. Experts tell us that the green celadon was the first of the monochromes to be made, and many pieces of great antiquity are known, few, however, so perfect as this one. The ware is said to have reached its highest development about 1500, when the Turks and Persians bought largely, valuing this self-colour not only for its

⁶⁷ "The porcelains manufactured by the Yueh potteries during the T'ang dynasty are the most ancient ceramics known in China (probably only earthenwares were used in earlier periods) but, alas, specimens are rare and almost impossible to find. It is stated that a certain Buddhist priest in Peking is the lucky owner of 10 tea-cups which are credited with belonging to that ancient period, but as to their genuineness it would be difficult to vouch with any degree of certainty."
—Rev. J. Hudson.

⁶⁸ All Chinese porcelains in which the decoration takes the form of a covering of single-coloured glaze are often classed under one head and spoken of as "celadon." But the term is also specifically used for the sea-green variety.

intrinsic beauty, but because they thought it an infallible test for poison in food.⁶⁹

In addition to these treasures we admire some beautiful specimens of *clair de lune*, a pair of semi-transparent bowls of *blanc de Chine* which are supposed to imitate ivory, a pair of small white vases, so fragile in appearance that it would seem dangerous to touch them, painted by the well-known artist Ku Yueh-hsien, besides boxes and tea-cups of the famous "peach-bloom" of inestimable value. The name is misleading to amateurs who expect the delicate pink of the peach flower, whereas "peach bloom" is actually "a dark reddish brown of unusual but beautiful tone, pierced through its surface in flecks of green and spots of pink reminding us of the bud when the first touch of spring coaxes it from its dark closed sheath," rather than the full-blown, rosy blossom.

⁶⁹ Porcelain played a great part in the early foreign relations of China. Chinese vases found in Egypt bear the marks of the T'ang and Sung dynasties (*Cathay and the Way Thither*, by Yule-Cordier). Arab trade with the "Middle Kingdom" flourished in the eighth and ninth centuries, and an Arab traveller of that time mentions porcelain vases so transparent that "water is seen through them." Saladin (1137-1193) Sultan of Egypt and Syria, defender of Acre against the Crusaders, sent 40 pieces of finest porcelain to Nur-ed-din Mahmud, who recovered Syria from them. Marco Polo, writing in 1280, described a visit to a Chinese factory, and stated that the porcelain was then exported all over the world. Later, when, in the reign of the Ming Emperors Yung Loh and Hsüan Têh a famous eunuch admiral went in command of a fleet of armed junks to India, Ceylon and Arabia, up the Red Sea as far as Jiddah, the port of Mecca, porcelain was included in the list of articles carried by him. Perhaps it was his expedition that brought the celadon vases sent by the Sultan of Egypt in 1487 to Lorenzo de Medici. (See *Chats on Oriental China*, by J. F. Blacker).

A curious collection of snuff bottles, medicine boxes, and nut trays with medallions of figures in Louis XV costume, attracts the Western eye. Most of them were painted by Father Castiglione or by his two native pupils. On closer view these *bibelots* appear trivial and artificial as compared with the noble simplicity of many purely Chinese compositions, the subtlety of their colour schemes and "the intensity with which they aim at the most direct and telling expression of their theme . . . Such aims are, in many respects, akin to those of the best Japanese school and to the genius of Whistler, it may be added, among Western masters"—(Bushell).

The hall beyond is devoted to a group of beautiful things recalling the gorgeous and elegant life that once existed in China, fostered by Imperial patronage. Bronze chariot ornaments,⁷⁰ golden horse shoes, saddles with carved stirrups, tiger-skin saddle-cloths, curved scimitars with hilts and scabbards ornamented with precious stones, carpets woven of silk and gold tissue, satin throne cushions and brocaded robes enriched by medallions of ivory and coral—all these trappings created with a splendid technical mastery to serve a courtly luxury and pomp, and adorned with every ornament that warms the imagination, attest stateliness and power, high intercourse with kingly and beautiful humanity, proud thoughts and splendid pleasures, throned sensualities and ennobled affections in

⁷⁰ The Chinese had chariot races and were addicted to all sports of horsemanship, including polo, in the era before Christ.

one blaze of earthly magnificence. The splendour of these past ages dazzles the eyes of moderns like ourselves, accustomed to frock coats and soft collars, and yet we must exclaim like de Goncourt at Versailles, "what a pity that these things of art should be consigned now to the cold tomb of a museum, and subjected to the careless glance of the stupid passer-by!"

Among other exhibits in the same room it is interesting to contrast the European taste and workmanship of the gifts offered by the French kings to the Manchus with the ornate gold and gilt tea-pots, boxes and beakers presented to the Throne by tributary Oriental nations.

How tawdry the gifts of East and West appear beside the display of bronze mirrors,⁷¹ each soberly dignified in a silken case that simulates the binding of a book—or the collection of brush-pots (*pi-t'ungs*), pens, seals and ink-slabs—from the Chinese point of view one of the most interesting and complete exhibits in the museum. So greatly were the scholar and his tools revered in the Celestial Empire that the best artists have not hesitated to employ their genius in decorating ink-blocks, and as a revelation of the delicacy and fertility of the Oriental imagination, these miniatures—fleeting creations intended

⁷¹ Some of the more valuable of these mirrors, dating from before our era, are called "Silver Soaked Mirrors" because, being buried with the dead to light the way to Hades, they became stained with the blood of the corpse and also permeated by the mercury which was used in preparing it for burial, and this mercury dissolved any silver ornaments which might have been put in the coffin.

to be reborn as beautiful thoughts under the brush of a poet, are worthy of more than a passing glance.

The same quality of dainty workmanship, coupled with fanciful inspiration, is shown in the carved bamboos, the tinted ivories, and in the chiselled "flat lacquer."⁷²

The case of jade next attracts our notice. Though the collection of old pieces is meagre, there are a few fine Han dynasty specimens, impregnated by age and burial in tombs with a variety of new colours. The more modern work, however, is by no means to be despised. The cutting of the Ch'ien Lung pieces is often beautiful, accentuating the waxy lustre which is the peculiar quality of good jade. For delicacy and finish of workmanship the rare yellow examples are unrivalled, as this shade being the most valuable and the hardest, only the finest craftsmen attempt to carve it.

⁷² Most of the ivory pieces were carved at the Imperial Ivory Works founded within the Palace at Peking towards the end of the seventeenth century in connection with the Kung Pu, the official "Board of Works." It is on record that the Emperor K'ang Hsi established in 1680 a number of factories and brought up practised craftsmen from all parts of the Empire. The list comprised the following departments: 1. Metal foundries. 2. Fabrication of "ju-yi" (sceptres). 3. Glass works. 4. Clock and watch manufactory. 5. Preparation of maps and plans. 6. Fabrication of cloisonné enamels. 7. Fabrication of helmets. 8. Work in jade, gold and filigree. 9. Gilding. 10. Ornamental chiselling of reliefs. 11. Manufacture of ink-stones. 12. Incrusted work. 13. Works in tin and tin plating. 14. Ivory carving. 15. Wood engraving and sculpturing. 16. Fabrication of lacquer. 17. Chiselling movable type. 18. Fabrication of incense-burning sets. 19. Manufacture of painted boxes. 20. Joiners and carpenters. 21. Lantern manufactory. 22. Artificial flowers. 23. Works in leather. 24. Mounting pearls and jewels. 25. Chiselling metals. 26. Armourers. 27. Manufacture of optical instruments. These ateliers which lasted for a century or more, were closed one by one after the reign of Ch'ien Lung, and what remained of the buildings was burned down in 1869. *Chinese Art Handbook*, by Bushell.

In addition to their favourite jades of many colours, the Chinese have a great fondness for other semi-precious stones which they use to imitate flowers and fruits. The agate marguerites, the amethyst grapes, the ruby pomegranates, the peach trees of tourmaline with crystal leaves growing among rocks of chrysoprase and coral, appeal to us only as ingenious curiosities. But these flowers and fruits of fairyland were formerly favourite adornments of palaces and valued new-year gifts from the sovereign to his faithful servitors.

Returning again through the connecting passage to the outer hall, the visitor passes numerous cases of porcelains, none of which call for special remark except the monochromes. These are the supreme beauties of Chinese ceramic art by common consent of all connoisseurs—Eastern and Western—unsurpassed for sheer loveliness of form and poetry of outline. The brilliant artistic renaissance which distinguishes the reign of K'ang Hsi is nowhere more marked than in these single-coloured glazes, but many fine pieces were also made under Ch'ien Lung and Yung Cheng. Both eras saw the introduction of new varieties and the perfecting of those revived from earlier periods, till every colour of the rainbow was triumphantly reproduced—the creamy white, the blue white, the dead white, the hundred blues, turquoise, *fouetté*, *soufflé*, *trempe*, the luminous yellow of sunshine, the dead gold tint of autumn leaves, the purple of the grape, the cracked green of ancient ice, the tea colour with its metallic lustre, the onion and the camellia green,

the black, lustrous as the pupil of the eye, the sunset reds—shades which, though first perfected by the Chinese 600 years ago, we are not yet able to imitate.

As we reluctantly leave the treasures of this central hall, a small closed building on the right attracts our attention. It contains nothing curious, yet is itself a curiosity. This is the *hammam* (bath house) built by order of Ch'ien Lung to please the same capricious lady (concubine only in name, since to her lord's despair she refused all his advances) for whom the infatuated emperor built a mosque opposite the Hsin Hua Mên.⁷³

The last hall belonging to the museum group, on the right hand side of the courtyard going out, contains a marvellous exhibit of bronzes mostly dating from 1000 to 1500 B.C. Taken as a whole collection, the bronzes are certainly the finest things in the museum from the artistic point of view; incomparably so, too, from that of the archæologist. Above all they are valuable as types of the earliest Chinese art forms which have been copied throughout the ages in porcelain, lacquer and even to-day in cheap modern brass. A study of them impresses on our minds the curious continuity of Chinese art. It may be objected that the routine practice, the repetition of shapes of these Chou and Han metals in Ming porcelains for example, forbade much precious initiative—that because of it art rested almost stationary, reproducing the same forms and decorations which responded to the

⁷³ See beginning of Chapter V.

demands, habits and customs of a people whose needs scarcely varied. Yet, on the other hand tradition served to stay the restlessness of innovations and encouraged noble restraint and simplicity. After all, there is a sense of security in old things which time has criticised for us favourably.

Moreover, these vessels dating from far distant antiquity express the soul and development of the Chinese race. The libation cups from which wine was poured in honour of the immortals prove, with their profound poetry of reverential feeling, how China has for countless generations been ruled by the cult of the dead. The incense burners and the temple bells attest the piety of by-gone ages, just as the vases and platters show the elegance of life in ancient times. The inscriptions on these vessels, when decyphered, afford us a history of the country, its wars and ceremonies, in the earliest forms of the Chinese written language. For all these reasons, the most thoughtless must look with respect on such beautiful evidences of ancient civilization that have withstood the vicissitudes of centuries.

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Leaving the museum and turning eastward, we traverse several vast courtyards intersected by winding waters, bridged and bordered with carved white marble, in the direction of the Tung Hua Mên, the usual entrance for officials attending audience when the Court was in residence at the Winter Palace, and memorable as

the gate where the head of a foreigner, captured by the Boxers in 1900, was suspended in a basket.

How great and imposing are these vast spaces whose every stone recalls a mighty past. In breadth of composition, in opulence of colour, in nobility of architecture, how fittingly these palaces prove that the mighty Yung Loh and his son, and his son's son, magnificently reigning, commanded the builder, the carver, the painter to erect and adorn dwellings more haughty than any which had been known of old, that poets throughout the ages might chant their glory in high words.

To appreciate the fullest beauty of the whole Forbidden City lifting its yellow roofs to the sun we should be able to approach it, as the old sovereigns did, up the long avenue from the Chung Hua Mên (the Dynastic Gate opposite the Ch'ien Mên), passing freely through all the intervening barriers. Unfortunately this is not permitted. The Chung Hua Mên is open, and we may walk along the stone paved road as far as the T'ien An Mên, flanked by two marble pillars smoothed with soft sculpture to reflect a ceaseless sunshine and rise into a cloudless sky. But the three gates beyond are shut.⁷⁴

Between the T'ien An Mên and the Wu Mên lies

⁷⁴ Until the establishment of the Republic the Dynastic Gate was also shut and so was the paved walk formerly bordered by the barracks of Manchu Bannermen, except for the passage of the sovereign and foreign envoys when presenting credentials. The Minister and his staff were then carried straight through as far as the Wu Mên, from which the *Chef de Mission* was taken in an open palace chair to the hall of audience while his staff walked.

the outer part of the Forbidden City, subdivided by the Tuan Mên (closed). In the eastern half, that no one is allowed to enter, stands the T'ai Miao or Temple of Ancestors. This, under the Manchu rule, was considered the most sacred spot in Peking except the Temple of Heaven. The palace pleasure grounds of the western side are now a public park (the Central Park) in which the She Chi T'an or Altar of Harvests may be visited. Only the reigning sovereign was entitled to sacrifice on this altar. On the terrace, built in three tiers of white marble, are five different coloured earths brought from different parts of the Empire. Yellow, black, red, white and blue, these soils supposedly represent the five points of the Chinese compass, north, south, east, west and centre, but they also correspond to the colours of the Republican flag.

The famous Wu Mên or Meridian Gate, is the official entrance to the inner Forbidden City and the grandest of all the palace gates. There is the reminder of a fortress in its walls, its massive towers and heavy wooden doors intended to swing open slowly and solemnly for stately ceremonies. Whenever the sovereign passed through the central archway reserved for him, a bell in the tower above was struck. When his troops returned in triumph from conquest, he received them here, and here the prisoners they brought were presented to him. Here, too, the presents he conferred on vassals and ambassadors were pompously bestowed, and the calendar for the whole Empire distributed at the New Year.

Times change. The portals of the Wu Mên open but seldom since the Manchu abdication. There is even talk of establishing a national library in the buildings above. In a few years no doubt, the tourist will hurry irreverently through this glorious Imperial arch. But for the present we must content ourselves with views of its fine proportions from the Central Park or from the courtyards near the museum which we cross to reach the T'ai Ho Mên (Gate of Supreme Harmony) opposite when we visit the principal throne halls.

The grand *cour d'honneur* beyond the T'ai Ho Mên is one of the most impressive sights in China, rivalling in its way even the Place de la Concorde.⁷⁵ The majesty of its proportions, the splendour of the surrounding buildings on their high marble terraces in the radiant sunshine, with the superb contrast of their masses of cast shadow, is almost overwhelming. If we compare the beauty and purity of line here to the over-elaborate Hindoo and Indo-Chinese art, as shown for example at Angkor, we must admit the superiority of an instinctive classical taste which well knows the greatest architectural secret of decorating a construction, but never descends to construct a decoration. "Ornament the Servant," according to a great critic, "is often slavish where Line, the Master, would have been free. The Servant is often silent where the Master would have been eloquent, or hurried where

⁷⁵ At the official review and celebration of the Allied Victory in 1918 more than fifteen thousand troops and guests were present in this court, yet three times as many people could have been comfortably accommodated.

the Master would have been serene . . . The southern eye is not satisfied by the simplicity of flat and massive outlines, and the southern builders remain in a narrowed field—one of smaller divided pinnacles and dots and crochets and twitched faces," whereas the genius of Yung Loh's architects created monuments in harmony with all that is grand in all the world.

Three of the principal throne halls, known as the San Ta Tien, stand one behind the other on a single platform. The first and finest is the T'ai Ho Tien or Throne Hall of Supreme Harmony, called, since the Republic, Li T'ang or Ceremonial Hall.

A lofty structure 110 feet high, 200 feet long and 100 feet wide, with five flights of carved marble steps leading from the ground to its high terrace with the curious Sun and Moon dials and gilt bronze cisterns glowing before its doors, this hall was formerly used only on occasions of the highest ceremony, such as the enthronement of a new emperor or the occasion of an Imperial birthday.⁷⁶

The interior is soberly splendid. Pillars of bronze-coloured lacquer, pillars of rich red, support the painted beams of the coffered ceiling which shows the blues and greens of the peacock's tail, and the design of the dragon,

⁷⁶ It was in this building that the foreign representatives officially recognised Yuan Shih-k'ai as President of the Republic of China in 1913.

Foreign envoys were sometimes received in the "Three Great Halls" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

symbol of masculine strength, emblem of Imperial power⁷⁷—the most picturesque and powerful of all animal forms.

But the greatest feature of the building, as always in Chinese architecture, is the roof. This preponderance of a part usually sacrificed in Western architecture is justified by the smaller vertical elevation of a plan originally derived from the tent-model, but carried to the highest perfection and made enduring by the use of materials that last. The downward curve of the tiling and the upward tilt of the eaves are simply the natural slope of the canvas and its uplifting by the tent poles. The slender tent poles themselves have developed into the supporting pillars, while the ornamental eaves are but the solidified fringes of embroidered valances, and their gargoyles the evolution of the weights which once held them in place.⁷⁸

For the sake of variety the Chinese architect would occasionally double or even triple his roof, as he has done in the T'ai Ho Tien, or introduce an interior dome or "lantern" in the ceiling—a height-giving device most effective from within, yet invisible from the outside. He

⁷⁷ There are many kinds of dragons in China. "We find the *lung*, dragon of the sky, the *li*, dragon of the sea, and the *kiau*, dragon of the marshes. Also there are scaly dragons and dragons winged, horned, hornless or rolled." The five-clawed dragon, the leading motive of decoration in Chinese palaces, was reserved for the use of the Emperor, like the 16 petalled chrysanthemum in Japan. It was in fact symbolical not only of the sovereign power but of all that pertained to the Emperor. His person was called the "Dragon's Person," his countenance the "Dragon's Face," his pen the "Dragon's Brush," his throne the "Dragon's Seat," and his children the "Dragon's Seed." *Chats on Oriental China*, by J. F. Blacker.

⁷⁸ See *With the Empress Dowager*, by K. A. Carl.

also gave careful attention to the decoration of the crest and eaves with their grotesque animal forms, and the colouring of the brilliant glazed tiles was never chosen at random but regulated by strict sumptuary laws to denote the rank of his patron. Finally, the close observer will notice that however straight and square roofs may appear from a distance, there is actually not a single straight line in them. Even the main sweep of the tiles has a slight wave, a ripple, which is not accidental but expressly introduced to charm the eye without detracting from the purity of line or its restful simplicity.

Behind the T'ai Ho Tien stands the Chung Ho Tien. This is a smaller square building, where the Emperor yearly inspected agricultural implements and samples of seeds, and whence Kuang Hsü was arrested in September 1898 and taken away to confinement on the Ocean Terrace in the Sea Palace.

The third of the Great Throne Halls, the Pao Ho Tien, was formerly the Examination Hall where candidates for the Han Lin Academy were received.

No permits are issued under any circumstances to visit that part of the Forbidden City (occupying less than half a square mile) which lies behind it and is closed off by a red wall and a sealed gate—the Ch'ien Ch'ing Mên, or Gate of Resplendent Brilliancy. Here the deposed Manchu Emperor lives, the lonely child called from his play to sit upon the Dragon Throne, only to see his mighty empire shrink to this. In this tiny world he and his Court still keep up a semblance of the old régime. Edicts

are issued under the old reigning title; princes make obeisance to their monarch; eunuchs serve him in official robes. Curious this make-believe kingdom, curious and infinitely pathetic, too, this last stronghold of mystery in once mysterious Peking!

Let us not regret that we are shut out—but make the most of the few forbidden places left to us; they are so few, and the world promises to be so much less alluring when all are freely open to the general public. “The charm of the forbidden that leads to so much devouring of unripe apples in early youth still holds good for later years. And to the end of time the sight we may not see will probably be the sight that haunts our dreams.”

Although closed, it is easy for us to trace the plan of the forbidden corner of the Winter Palaces from maps and from the descriptions of eye-witnesses who visited it when the Allied troops defiled through the courtyards and halls in 1900.⁷⁹

Behind the Ch'ien Ch'ing Mên a line of palaces continues, all of great historical interest. The most famous of them is the Ch'ien Ch'ing Kung, considered

⁷⁹ A full list of gates and buildings may be found in Dr. Williamson's *Journeys in North China*, and many Chinese plans are on sale in the bookshops of the Liu Li Ch'ang outside the Ch'ien Mên. After 1900 the Japanese also issued books on the Forbidden City, limited editions now nearly exhausted, such as *The Imperial City of Peking* in two Volumes profusely illustrated with specially taken photographs, compiled by the Imperial Museum of Tokio, and *The Decorations of the Imperial Palaces of Peking* in one volume with 80 plates, mostly in original colours.

by the Chinese themselves the most important of all the Palace edifices. Here the Emperor used to give audiences to the Grand Council, and after the Boxer rising (in accordance with the new ceremonial laid down by the Peace Protocol) to the Diplomatic Body, Western nations having at last realised the importance of their envoys being received in the Winter Palace Throne Halls and insisting upon it. In this building the Emperor Kuang Hsü discussed and decided with K'ang Yu-wei the reform programme of 1898, and it was here that his body lay awaiting burial from November 1908 to February 1909. Associated with the Ch'ien Ch'ing Kung is the remembrance of a singular festival which the Emperor K'ang Hsi celebrated for a thousand men over 60 years of age in 1711, that being the fiftieth year of his reign. The guests, who came from all parts of the Empire, were served with food and wine by the Emperor's sons and grandsons. Ch'ien Lung repeated the same ceremony for 2,000 guests in 1785, also the fiftieth year of his reign. Those who had reached 90 years of age were invited to the table where the Emperor himself sat and, standing, they took food with him.

Beyond the Ch'ien Ch'ing Kung are other great halls for special ceremonies, such as the Chiao T'ai Tien, the "Hall of Imperial Marriage Rites," and the K'un Ning Kung,⁸⁰ Throne Hall of the Empress, with the K'un Ning Mên which is the gate leading to the Yü Hua Yuan, a

⁸⁰ See *Shaman Temple*.

fine rock-garden, separately walled, with temples, kiosks, a lake and an artificial mound on which is a grotto with an Imperial inscription: "The Source of Clouds."

The official buildings are bordered east and west by walls and gates which give access to the Imperial living apartments, quarters for eunuchs and concubines (for where women were concerned the emperors of China were naturally polygamous and patriarchal), store houses, etc. In the north-eastern corner, in an area extending to the outer walls of the Forbidden City, were the buildings occupied by the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, among them the famous Ning Shou Kung where the Old Buddha resided during the Siege, where she buried her treasure, and where she returned to live pending the restoration of the Sea Palaces, desecrated by foreign occupation; likewise the Huang Chi Tien where, after her return from exile, she was accustomed to receive officials in audience on the rare occasions when she lived in the Winter Palace, and where her remains lay for nearly a year awaiting burial.

The buildings in the north-western corner were formerly occupied by her co-Empress and rival Tz'ü An, an arrangement which led to Tz'ü Hsi being known as the Empress of the East and Tz'ü An as Empress of the West.⁸¹

⁸¹ *Kung* is a group of palaces or buildings with dependencies, generally used for residence. *Tien* is a "first class palace," usually a throne hall and of one story only. *T'an* is a small hall, and *T'ing* an open pavilion. Certain second-class palaces, often with an upper story, are called *Ko*.

PLAN OF PALACES, FORBIDDEN CITY.

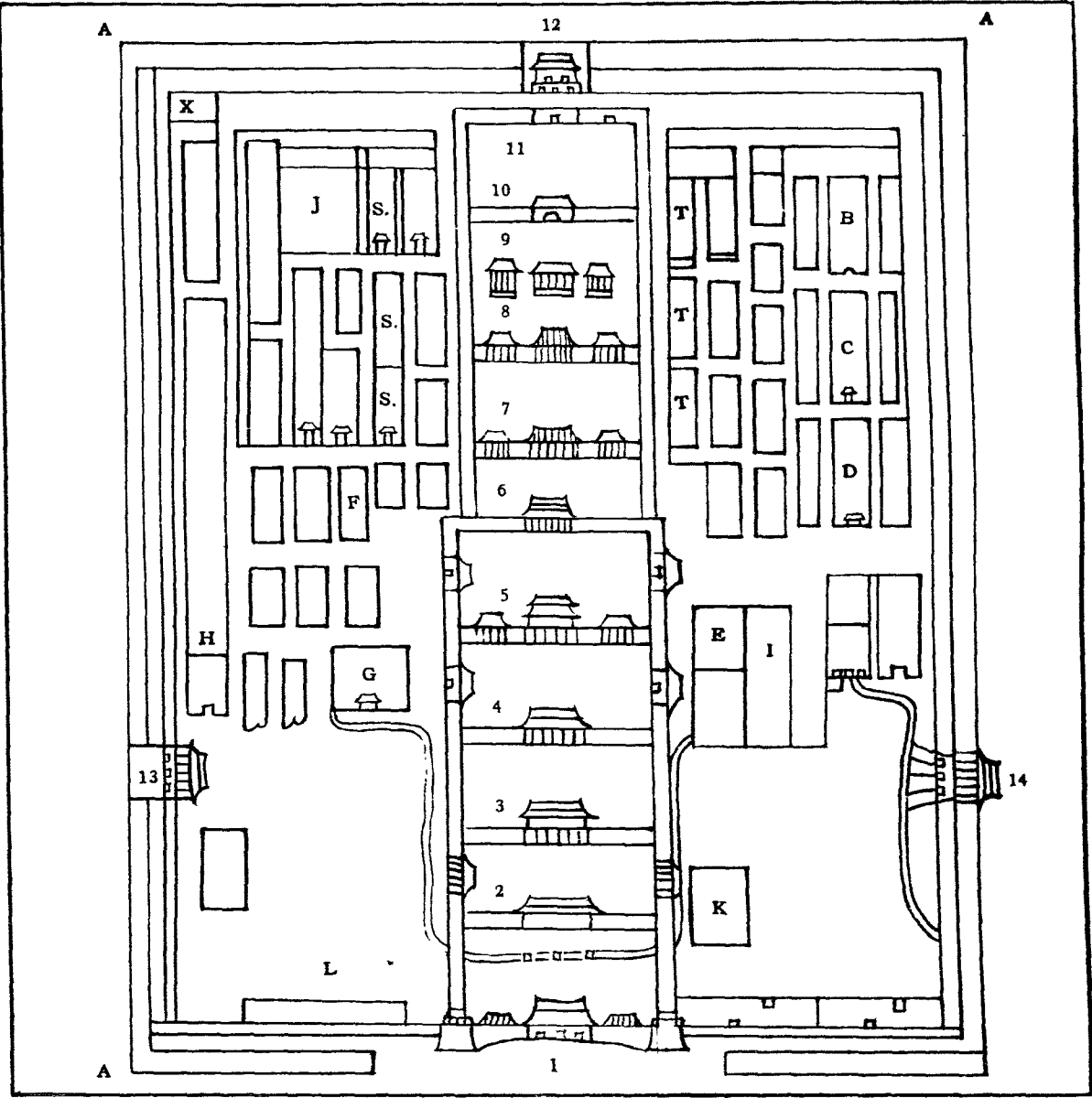
N.

1. Wu Mên. 2. Tai Ho Mên. 3. Tai Ho Tien. 4. Chung Ho Tien. 5. Pao Ho Tien.
6. Ch'ien Ch'ing Mên. 7. Ch'ien Ch'ing Kung. 8. Chiao T'ai Tien, a throne hall where the
Imperial seals are kept. 9. K'un Ning Kung, Palace of the Empress. 10. K'un Ning Mên.
11. Yü Hua Yuan, garden. 12. Shen Wu Mên. 13. Hsi Hua Mên. 14. Tung Hua Mên.

AA Moats, store houses. B. Yang Hsing Tien, a throne hall in which the Emperor
T'ung Chih resided during the whole of his reign. C. Ning Shou Kung, palace of the Empress
Dowager Tzû Hsi, including D. the Huang Chi Tien. E. Wen Yuan Ko, former Imperial
library. F Tz'u Ning Kung, palace of the Empress Dowager Tzû An during the co-Regency.
G. Wu Ying Tien, a throne hall used at one time as a Court Printing Press, now the Museum.
H Nei Wu Fu, Imperial Household Department. I. Ch'uan Hsin Tien, formerly a memorial
hall to Confucius and other philosophers. K. Nei Ko, formerly used by the Privy Council.
L. Nan Hsun Tien, a throne hall where the portraits of emperors of former dynasties were kept.
S.S.S. Palaces for the chief Imperial concubines. T.T.T. Palaces for the Heir to the Throne
and his brothers. J. Hsi Hua Yuan, garden X. Ch'eng Huang Miao, temple to the guardian
spirit of the city, built in 1726.

W.

E.



S.

The Forbidden City ends at the Shen Wu Mên, or Gate of Divine Military Prowess. It was through this gate that the Old Buddha and the Emperor Kuang Hsü fled ignominiously in the garb of their humblest subjects as the Allied troops were entering Peking, in the dawn of August 13th, 1900. This same gate remains the portal of communication of the deposed Emperor with the outer world, and, when passing by, we often see groups of eunuchs, retainers or loyal officials entering or leaving by it in the old-fashioned Court costumes, never to be seen elsewhere.

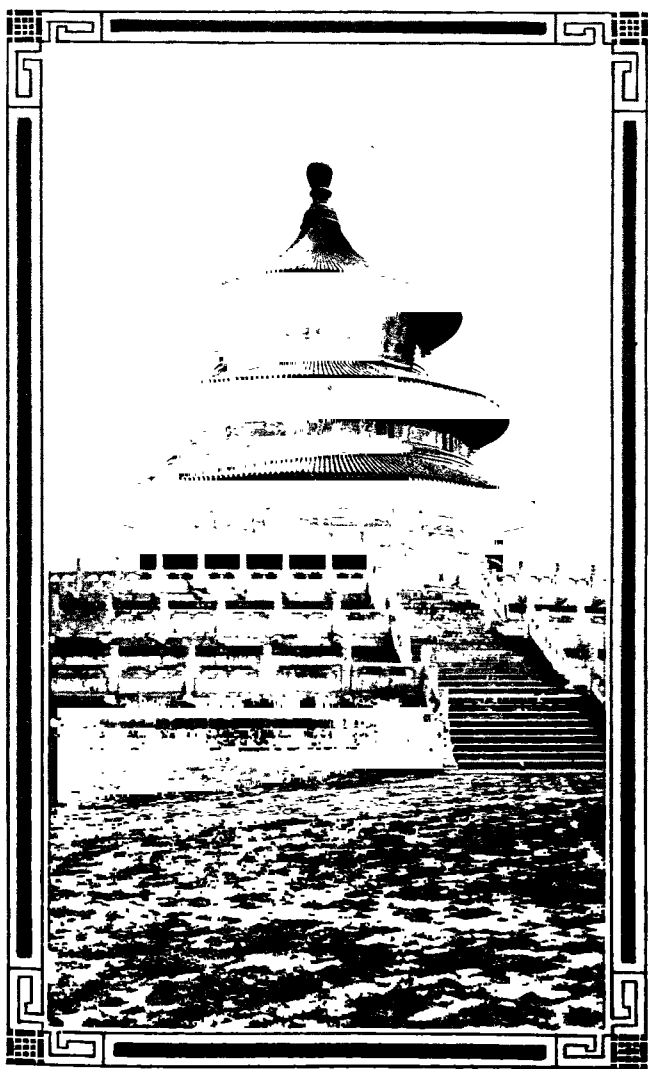
CHAPTER VII

THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN AND THE TEMPLE OF AGRICULTURE.

SECOND only to the Palaces in splendour, and surpassing them in holiness, is the magnificent temple dedicated to the Worship of Heaven. No other sanctuary on earth has a more profound or grandiose conception, or more adequately expresses the instinctive desire of humanity to show reverence for a Power above and beyond its puny self. The marble altar, radiant in its isolation, is a survival of those primitive altars on which the Perfect Emperors offered sacrifice 4,000 years ago, or which Abraham erected in his wanderings. It is one of the few remaining relics of the original Chinese monotheistic faith—the old, old belief that God is everywhere, invisible and all-seeing, “dwelling in a house not made with hands”—held in Asia before the gods were personified and their images enshrined in temples.

One man and only one, the Emperor, the Son of Heaven, was thought fit to ascend this worshipping place and, under the dome of the sky which covers it like a hollow turquoise, to make obeisance to the Supreme Being.

By reason of his divine descent, he alone could represent the “invisible power resident in the visible Heavens,” and was looked up to by the people as their



THE CH'I NIEN TIEN—TEMPLE OF HEAVEN.

consecrated "Sin Bearer." Naturally then his most honourable prerogatives were the annual sacrifices to the Ruler of the Universe.

Though the exact origin and meaning of these sacrifices became gradually lost in the mists of antiquity, the fact of their continuity for more than 4,000 years lent them a special moral significance. But with the passing of time the worship also grew to have a political importance, because the duty of performing it belonged by right to the reigning sovereign, and from a dethroned monarch the right passed on to his conqueror whose success was considered evidence of the call of Destiny, making him the representative of God on earth. "The public offering of sacrifice to the Creator was therefore regarded as the chief evidence of the authority to rule, and partly on this account the practice was strictly observed and jealously guarded by the sovereigns all down the ages."²

As the father of his people, sole fountain of power and honour, the Head of the State must not only be worthy to stand as the Pontiff-Supreme before the Deity but bear the nation's sins upon his shoulders. The responsibility of the sovereign was acknowledged by the "Emperor T'ang (1766 B.C.) who said: 'When guilt is found anywhere in you (the people) occupying the myriad regions, let it rest on me, The One Man.' Again, when a human sacrifice was suggested as a means of propitiating

² *The Original Religion of China*, by John Ross, D.D.

Heaven in a time of great famine, he declared: 'If a man must be the victim, I will be he.' The ruler then fasted, cut off his hair and nails, and in a plain cart drawn by white horses clad in rushes in the guise of a sacrificial victim, proceeded to a grove of mulberry trees where he prayed, asking to what error or crime of his life the calamity was owing. That was in the eighteenth century before Christ. In the nineteenth century after Christ, a prayer very similar in intention was offered up by Tao Kuang (1832)' ⁸³ when drought scourged the land. Again in 1903, Kuang Hsü besought that rain be not withheld on account of his sins.

The Great Sacrifices⁸⁴ at the Temple of Heaven, where the Emperor gave formal expression to his function

⁸³ *My Chinese Notebook*, by Lady Susan Townley.

⁸⁴ The sacrifices at the Temple of Heaven belonged to the category of Great Sacrifices, which also included those to Earth, the Imperial Ancestors, to the Gods of Land and Grain, to Confucius and the special patrons of each Dynasty, as distinguished from the Medium Sacrifices and the Small Sacrifices to the Sun and Moon, the patrons of Agriculture and Silk Weaving, to Mountains, Rivers, and Great Men. The distinguishing features of the Great Sacrifices were the open altar and the whole burnt offering—essential requirements which remained unchanged from the time of the Perfect Emperors (3000 B.C.) to the Manchus—though the accompanying rites were elaborated gradually. Twenty-six centuries before the Christian era there was already a Master of Ceremonial Ritual in China showing the importance attached even in those early days to forms. In the Book of Rites (Department of Sacrifice) of the Manchu Dynasty the Worship of Heaven is prescribed with minute detail. The accompanying plan gives a list of the offerings to Shang Ti, the Supreme Deity, and of the persons present (among whom it is worthy of notice that no priests appear) to assist the Emperor. The reader is once more referred to the book of Dr. Ross for a translation of the full Ritual and many picturesque and interesting details too long to quote here.

PLAN OF SACRIFICES. ALTAR OF HEAVEN.

This plan, compiled from the Manchu "Directory of Worship," refers to that portion of the Temple of Heaven enclosure in which the sacrifice is offered and its attendant ceremonies performed.

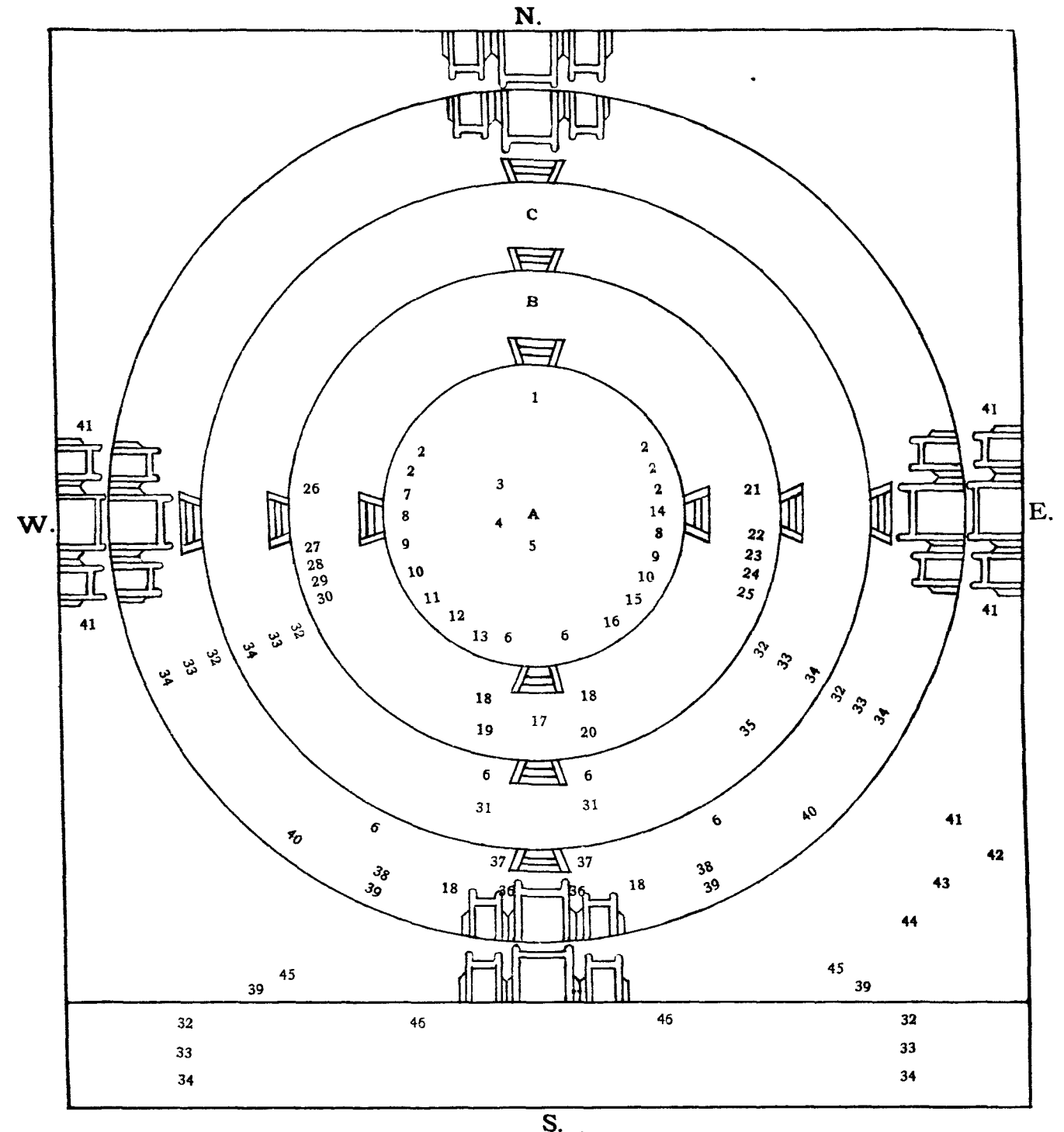
A. The third or highest platform on which is set the shrine to *Shang Ti* and the shrines to the Five Emperors. These offerings are placed between the numerals 1 and 3 of the Plan.

B. The second platform.

C. The lowest platform.

1. Position (above the steps) of the shrine of *Shang Ti*, facing south.
2. The shrines of the Five Emperors facing east and west.
3. The praying place with the table for the Written Prayer.
4. The *tsum*, or Wine Vessel.
5. The place for the Reciter of the Written Prayer.
6. Large censers for incense (*lu*).
7. Imperial Guards.
8. Officials in charge of incense.
9. Officials in charge of silks (offerings).
10. Officials in charge of sacrificial vessels.
11. Place for the Reciter of the Prayer.
12. Officials in charge of kneeling cushions.
13. Officials of the Censorate.
14. The *Kuang Lu*, or officials who present meat and drink to the Emperor.
15. Officials in charge of placing the shrines, etc.
16. Officials of the Board of Rites.
17. Place of the Emperor.
18. The official Assistants of the Emperor—the Sacrificial Court and the Prompter.
19. Officials in charge of kneeling cushions, etc. (Same as 12).
20. Officials of the Censorate. (Same as 13).
21. Shrine to the Sun. (On second platform).
22. Shrine to the North Star.
23. Shrine to the Five Planets.
24. Shrine to the Twenty-eight Constellations.
25. Shrine to the Host of Stars.
26. Shrine to the Moon.
27. Shrine to the Clouds.
28. Shrine to Rain.
29. Shrine to the Wind.
30. Shrine to Thunder.
31. Place for the Princes.
32. Place for the Censors.
33. Place for officials of the Board of Rites.
34. Place for the Ushers.
35. Place for the Director of Ceremonies.
36. Place for the subordinate attendants who sacrifice to the Secondary Deities.
37. Place for the *Pei Tzu* and Dukes.
38. Place for the musicians and dancers.
39. Place for minor officials assisting.
40. Place for the singers.
41. The furnaces (*liao*) for burning the silks, etc.
42. The place for officials in charge of this burning.
43. The great furnace for the whole-burnt sacrifice of the bull.
44. The ceremonial place whence this burning of the sacrifice is witnessed.
45. Assistants.
46. Place for minor officials to witness the burning of the sacrifice.

Reproduced from *The Original Religion of China*, by John Ross, D.D.



of Supreme Intercessor, took place annually at the Summer and Winter Solstices, the latter on the same day as the old Druidic and Teutonic ceremony from which Christmas originated. Indeed the Chinese rites were a form of nature worship similar to that practised by our own ancestors thousands of years ago.

No foreigner has ever beheld the Emperor officiating in his capacity of High Priest, but the Altar has been seen prepared for the occasion,⁸⁵ the huge horn lanterns hoisted on their poles, the gilt, dragon-entwined stands for the musical instruments, the resting tents and the decorative banners set up, and the shrine to represent Heaven placed upon the highest platform facing south. Together with the tablet of "Shang Ti," the Supreme Deity, the ancestral tablets of five of the "Imperial Forefathers" stood on the same platform, facing east and west, while secondary shrines to the sun, the moon and the elements were ranged below.

On the day before the ceremony the Emperor left the Palace by the Wu Mên in a yellow sedan chair borne on the shoulders of 16 carriers. "The Imperial cortège was a kaleidoscopic feast of colour. There were mounted eunuchs in gorgeous robes carrying paraphernalia for the sacrifice, escorts of the Leopard Tail Guards, grooms in

⁸⁵ The Imperial Visit to the Temple of Heaven was duly announced beforehand in the official "Peking Gazette," and special notice sent to each Legation warning foreigners not to approach or attempt to look upon the Imperial procession. Chinese were ordered to remain indoors and to put up their shutters along the line of route, while the side streets were closed off with blue cloth curtains.

the Imperial liveries of maroon satin, standard bearers in velvet-trimmed uniforms with triangular dragon flags, quaint horsemen with bows and arrows, led ponies with yellow saddle cloths."⁸⁶

Escorted by this brilliant retinue, the Emperor slowly passed on his way to the "Great Lofty Shrine," located three miles south of the Palace because it had ever been the custom to perform the sacrifices to Heaven in the outskirts of the capital. The central gate of the Ch'ien Mên was opened to allow of His Majesty's passage, the picturesque marble "Bridge of Heaven" cleared of booths and beggars, and the street smoothed where it had been worn into ruts by the serrated wooden tires of carts, and paved with sand.

The city seemed to hold its breath, awed by the deep solemnity of the occasion. In absolute silence, the sovereign made his journey and his sacrifice. Lest even the whistle of a distant train break the impressive stillness and thus profane the rites, there was no railway traffic in or out of Peking from the time he left his palace until his return to it.

The Son of Heaven awaited in solemn majesty in the Chai Kung, or Hall of Abstinence, the coming of that mystic hour before dawn which was to assemble round him the spirits of his ancestors. He ascended the marble platform bearing the round jade tablet (*pi*), the ancient mace-head symbol of sovereignty. He knelt in

⁸⁶*My Chinese Notebook*, by Lady Susan Townley.

reverence before the only Master he acknowledged, and, as the smoke of the whole burnt offering—a bullcalf of unmixed colour and without flaw—rose in clouds of white incense to Heaven, with trembling voice he gave expression in the name of his people to the loftiest idea of worship they knew—to that worship which, “whilst recognising as sole divinity the spirit of the great blue dome overhead, discards all base idolatry and superstitious practices.”³⁷

Very strange to Western eyes were the forms of worship, the shapes of sacred objects, the actions and attitudes of the Imperial High Priest and his assistants. Each movement was regulated by tradition, and to perform well the functions even of an assistant necessitated a long disciplinary preparation. Officiating, the Emperor seemed rather a statue than a man, an image directed by invisible hands, his every gesture full of mystic significance, while the immemorial hymns of peace were chanted and the mimes performed the sacred dances with rhythmic steps.

When the Republic was established, the question of who should worship Heaven disturbed the conservative element of Chinese officialdom until Yuan Shih-k'ai, a man strong enough to make his own precedents, quoted the old, unwritten law that the public offering of this sacrifice “was the chief evidence of the right to rule,”

³⁷*Ibid.*

and claimed, as the head of the new Government, the prerogatives of Official Intercessor. The ceremony actually took place, but it was a pale shadow of the former sacrifices, grotesquely modernized by the presence of a cinematograph operator. Even Yuan Shih-k'ai himself realised that, without the prestige of Imperial descent, what should have been reverent became meaningless because the majesty and the sincerity of the worship had departed. It was therefore abandoned as un-republican and the nation, indifferently transferring allegiance from Emperor to President, gave a remarkable example of how the Chinese will sometimes suddenly accept the overthrow of their traditions.

The Temple of Heaven has been alternately opened and closed to foreigners for many years—closed sometimes through their own impious behaviour, as for example when vandals danced on the marble altar. After 1860 entrance to the grounds was easily gained by a small tip to the gatekeeper but, when the privilege was abused, the domain was once more rigorously shut. In the eighties a few foreigners entered by riding through a broken wall. But after 1900 the Allied troops forced their way in, and the First Bengal Lancers and a Punjabi regiment were quartered there, the officers' mess being installed in the Emperor's Robing Room (the Hall of Abstinence). Though military necessity was the excuse for the invasion of these mysterious solitudes, the Chinese were deeply shocked by it. The defilement proved an additional pretext for neglecting necessary repairs to the

temples, which in a few decades threatened to present only a heap of ruins overgrown with grass and weeds.

The place remained open for several years, shorn by events of much of its romance. A corner of the park was used for a time by the foreign community as a polo ground. Later, sports were held in the enclosure, and, on the establishment of the Republic, the Chinese themselves devoted part of it to an agricultural station of the Forestry Bureau. Yuan Shih-k'ai also opened the temples for three days to the Chinese public, and for the first time the populace walked freely through the sacred precincts and Chinese women ascended the Altar of Heaven. Worse sacrilege still, General Chang Hsün camped his pig-tailed troops there in July 1917. A few days later, when he attempted to re-establish monarchy, the holy enclosure was the scene of a battle between his men and the Republican soldiers. Walls were loop-holed and shells burst over the blue domes of the buildings, fortunately doing little havoc.

Some efforts were made after the collapse of the Chang Hsün affair to repair the damage of time and of man — fortunately, since the neglect of a temple so inspiringly beautiful is a world tragedy. Both in the inner and outer park new roads were made, gates opened to allow of finer vistas, spacious courtyards cleared of grass, and the public admitted everywhere for a small charge. That rows of barracks and wireless masts have been set up are, however, shameful evidence of how utility is ousting reverence.

Luckily the hideous red-roofed buildings are not conspicuous from the temples themselves. Even in parts of the exterior enclosure, out of sight of these atrocities, we still get the impression of a grand old European park. The groves of stately trees, under whose shade herds of sacrificial cattle used to browse, the scent of wild herbs, the violets peeping through the grass awake home memories in this vast walled domain, where one seems to be miles from a noisy town.⁸⁸

The sacred buildings which as a group are generally called the Temple of Heaven, are protected by a second wall topped by a rooflet of green tiles. Though a shrine to the Invisible Deity, known as the Temple of Heaven, existed in very ancient times, the present buildings owe their construction to Yung Loh, the *Grand Monarque* of China, and date from A.D. 1420 after he transferred his capital from Nanking to Peking. They were repaired and re-decorated by Ch'ien Lung.⁸⁹

The Chai Kung, or Hall of Abstinence, where the Emperor used to keep the vigil that sanctified him for the service on the morrow while his attendants camped in the

⁸⁸The entire enclosure is three miles in circumference, or twice as large as the Legation Quarter.

⁸⁹Like Louis XIV. in France and Peter the Great in Russia, this long-lived, energetic sovereign has associated his name closely with his capital. Something of his mighty presence lingers in every monument, for, as a great patron of the arts, he left traces of his taste, his generosity and his impressions, usually in poetic form, everywhere, and no sovereign since Yung Loh has enjoyed the proud privilege of stamping his own individuality more strongly on the city than he.

surrounding grounds, is a comparatively modern building surrounded by a moat. Once it contained a handsome carved wooden screen and an Imperial throne, but these have disappeared now, like the famous bronze Statue of Silence. A short walk through a grove of splendid trees hoary with age brings us to the central altar. Standing open to the sky in a square of dull Pompeian red walls pierced with marble gateways, this exquisite pile of white marble is built in three terraces, each encompassed by a richly carved balustrade and approached by flights of broad low steps, giving access from north, south, east and west to the third and highest platform, the middle stone of which is looked upon by the Chinese as the central point of the Universe. The entire structure is laid out with geometrical precision, being the combined work of architects, astronomers and doctors of magic. Thus the terraces are reached by three flights of nine steps each, because the Chinese divided the heavens into nine sections and have nine points to their compass. Likewise the marble blocks of the platform are laid in nine concentric circles and everything is arranged in multiples of the same number. We may even count 360 pillars in the balustrades which thus signify the days in the Chinese lunar year and the degrees in the celestial circle.

The furnace for the flesh offering stands to the south-east of the altar at the distance of an arrow's flight : it is faced with green tiles and is nine feet high, ascended by three flights of steps ; the bullock used to be placed inside upon an iron grating under which a fire was kindled.

The rolls of silk, which also formed part of the offerings, were burned in eight open-work metal braziers; likewise the prayers written upon silk, after they had been formally presented and read before the tablets. An urn was added when an emperor died.

Directly north of the altar and facing it is the perfect little jewel of a building with a round roof of black enamelled tiles, known as the "Imperial World" (Huang Ch'ün Yü) where the sacred tablets were kept. A marble causeway behind leads to the Ch'i Nien Tien, or Temple of the Happy Year, whose triple roof is a conspicuous landmark all over Peking. Nothing could be lovelier than the approach to this hall—the raised marble avenue in the centre with the out-jutting platform for the Emperor's yellow resting tent, on the right and left groves of sombre firs, throwing into relief the white pavement. Probably of all beautiful things in China, the most beautiful are these approaches to temples and palaces which are after all so intimately connected and so much alike. The avenue ends at a gate with a curved and gabled roof. Beyond this we stand face to face with the noblest example of religious architecture in the whole of China. "Springing upwards from a three-teered marble terrace, the Temple of the Happy Year rises 99 feet into the air, a magnificent triple-roofed, azure-tiled, gold-capped shrine." In all the decorations it is the blue of the celestial vault, bending tenderly over this masterpiece of human aspiration, which triumphs. So it was meant to be, for the colour was deliberately repeated even in the porcelain of sacrificial

utensils that the Emperor used, on his own robes and those of his assistants, and the light that fell upon the sacred celebrations was softened to the delicate shade of a cloudless sky by thin glass rods strung together in cords and hung over the tracery of doors and windows.⁹⁰

In 1889 the "Temple of the Happy Year" was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. The Chinese believed that this disaster happened because a centipede dared to climb the gilded ball, and attributed the series of calamities that afterwards befell the Empire to the wrath of Heaven at such presumptuousness.

To appease this anger the temple was rebuilt. But the wood of the original columns, probably some kind of chestnut, could not be found. After a long search to fulfil the requirements of tradition, it was agreed to use Oregon pine of which huge logs were imported with much difficulty and at enormous expense.

These columns are one of the most remarkable features of the building. Four, elegantly lacquered, support the upper roof, while the two lower roofs rest upon 12 plain red pillars—all straight trunks of single

⁹⁰ "Colour symbolism," says Bushell, "is an important feature of Chinese rites. Just as at the Temple of Heaven all is blue, at the Temple of Earth all is yellow, at the Temple of the Sun, red, and at the Temple of the Moon, white, or rather the grayish blue which is known as *yueh pai* or moonlight white, pure white being reserved for mourning. The changing seasons have likewise a mystic significance which is reflected in the Imperial robes."

trees.⁹¹ Phoenixes and dragons adorn the panelled ceiling divided by painted cross-beams lustrous with colour and gold. The windows are covered with openwork wooden screens of graceful designs—designs in which the Chinese excel, more than 70 different patterns being known. Brass hinges, beautifully worked, and gilded bosses ornament the handsome doors which open to—emptiness. Only a throne screen with—curious modern note!—an electric bracket, and the shrines for the Ancestral Tablets stand lost and lonely in the shadows of the temple. Did the Chinese architects wish to tell us that all pomp and power and beauty lead to emptiness and silence?⁹²

A number of secondary buildings surround the central hall. They are closed—no matter for regret, being on the whole of little interest—guard houses, resting rooms for attendants, kitchens where the consecrated meats were

⁹¹The great weight of Chinese roofs always necessitates the multiple employment of the column which is thus assigned a function of the first importance, as the stability of the whole structure depends upon the framework. The walls, filled in afterwards with brickwork, are not intended to figure as supports. The space, in fact, is often occupied by doors and windows carved with elegant tracery of the most flimsy character. . . . The old Chinese buildings are therefore curiously analogous to the modern American buildings with their skeleton framework of steel filled in with dummy walls.—Bushell.

⁹²The first republicans were desirous of making this sacred building the cradle of their laws, and the Committee for drafting the Constitution held sittings here for a short time, but Yuan Shih-k'ai ended the work of this assembly.

prepared according to the ancient ritual, and store rooms where the sacrificial paraphernalia was formerly kept. What do repay a visit are the long cool corridors on the east that lead to an old disused well, near which a certain wild asparagus—noted for its medicinal qualities—used to grow, and the nine boulders, carved with clouds, that lie in the grass, and that legend assures us were used by the Emperor Yü to close the holes in the sky which caused the Deluge. In this quiet corner where the casual tourist so seldom penetrates, we can gaze with no fear of interruption over the acres of waving grass and stately trees intersected by marble avenues, absorbing the restful stillness of all this plenitude of space and light and air. Let us return, if time be given us, in the early morning when the light is pale and the roofs hang like a faint, faint vision in a milky atmosphere soft as memory, and again at high noon when the full splendour of heaven kindles and sparkles, and yet again when the sun is sinking like a fiery ball behind the Western Hills, touching the marble till it blushes. Let us stand once more on the Altar in the magic moonlight, or when the powdery flakes of snow descend with fairy, transforming touch. When we have seen the Temple of Heaven in many moods, then and only then will we appreciate the full harmony of proportions in the blending of human architecture with the beauty of trees and the spaciousness of the sky, and how truly it reflects life and life everlasting. Then we will feel that the sacred groves and buildings stand for wisdom, love and reverence and an

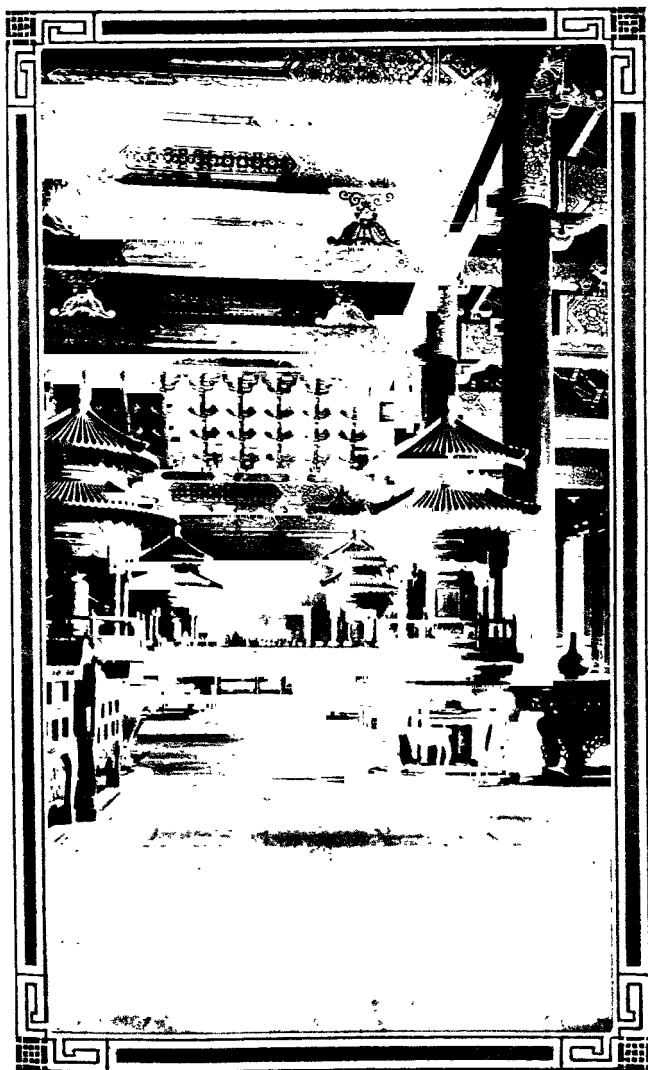
all pervasive peace that tempers the divine radiance to man's benighted understanding.

. . .

On the other side of the broad street leading from the Ch'ien Mên to the Yung Ting Mên the Temple of Agriculture (Hsien Nung T'an), dedicated to the cult of Shen Nung (about 3,000 B.C.), a prehistoric emperor known as the First Farmer, whose "special talents enabled him to understand the cereal world and exercise great influence over it," and to whom are ascribed the invention of the plough, the discovery of the medicinal properties of plants and the establishment of the first markets, is the counterpart of the Temple of Heaven, only on a smaller scale.

The temple has a deep significance in a country primarily agricultural where, as Emerson says, the people believe that "all trade rests at last on the farmer's primitive activity," and honour his calling;⁹³ where the sovereign himself confirms the high, idealistic position of the cultivator of the soil by offering solemn worship to the fruitfulness of the earth and to her grandeur. Here each year on the first day of the second period (*fu*) of spring he came with a numerous suite, including three princes and nine high officials, and worshipped Shen Nung's tablet in the large hall near the Hsien Nung T'an, or "Altar to the Inventor of Agriculture." He then went into the field set aside for the purpose and ploughed

⁹³In China the farmer is classed only after the scholar and before the merchant and the artisan, these being the four estates into which the people were divided.



HALL IN THE TEMPLE OF AGRICULTURE.

with his own hands a furrow from east to west, coming and going three times, thus setting an example of industry to his subjects, hallowing the beginning of the season's ploughing, and dignifying the toil of the meanest field labourer. The chief of the Ministry of Finance stood at the Emperor's right flourishing a whip, on his left the Viceroy of Chihli province, holding the seed, while a third official sowed it in the furrow behind His Majesty. When the Sovereign's task was finished, he retired to a resting place, the Ch'in Kêng T'ai, where he watched the princes and dignitaries finish the field. The ground was afterwards tended by certain old and skilled labourers chosen from among the farmers, and the crop, gathered in autumn, kept in storehouses and used only for special offerings. Following the Imperial example, the heads of provincial governments, the prefects and district magistrates all over the empire went through a similar ritual on the same day. But the rank of the Chief Actor rendered the ceremony most imposing in Peking.

The other large buildings in the Temple of Agriculture are the T'ai Sui Tien, or Temple to the Planet Jupiter, the Shen Chih T'an, or Altar to the Spirits of the Sky and Earth, and a palace—the Ch'ing Ch'eng Kung. To the north of the altar are four grey granite stones engraved with the dragons of the clouds. Sacrifices were offered here to the Five Sacred Mountains and the Five Ordinary Mountains. On two other stones are engraved representations of rivers, and at the bottom little receivers are hollowed out, which were filled with water at the

time of the sacrifice. Here, too, sacrifices were offered to the spirits of the Four Great Waters.⁹⁴

Though the present Temple of Agriculture was only built in the Chia Ching reign of the Ming dynasty (about 1520), the worship of the Emperor-God of Husbandry is infinitely old. We have a description of the ceremonies as practised under the Yuans and records tell us how, under the Mings, eunuchs assisted the Emperor. Like the Worship of Heaven, the cult of Shen Nung has been abandoned since the establishment of the Republic.

The enclosure, forbidden to visitors till after 1900 when it was occupied by General Chaffee and the American troops, is now open to the public, the outer area being used as a thoroughfare. The inner precincts, where the buildings are situated, has been made into a public park with neat railed walks, benches under the trees and cages for deer. Soldiers occupy some of the smaller halls, but the main hall, re-decorated by Ch'ien Lung, and the storehouses where the Emperor's yellow ploughs were kept, are closed and sealed. A trivial wooden summer house now stands upon the principal altar, which is square to represent earth, as the T'ien T'an (Altar of Heaven) is round to represent the heavens.

Those who knew the park before the tidying up process destroyed its originality and character—a process very different from artistic restoration and repair of beautiful old buildings—will always regret the peace, the love-

⁹⁴ See Hyacinth, also Madrolle, *North China*.

liness of the place as it was—a wild waste of grass land carpeted in summer with pretty mauve wild turnip flowers, where the bronzed, bent guardians cut rushes and piled their bundles of fragrant herbs, where silence, broken only by the cawing of the rooks or the song of a meadow lark, reigned, and one felt drawn close to the secret wonders and charities of the earth.

CHAPTER VIII

THREE TEMPLES OF THREE FAITHS

A PART from the worship of Heaven and of the Forces of Nature—official rather than popular rites—there were many religious cults in China and many temples to different faiths in Peking. That these existed so peaceably side by side was due to the innate toleration of a people not given by nature to strong religious convictions or antipathies. In fact, "China enjoys a unique position in religious thought," as Parker says,⁹⁵ "because samples of all religions have been presented to her in turn, and it is surely very much to her credit that at no period of her history have the ruling powers 'in being' ever for one instant refused hospitality and consideration to any religion recommended to them purely as such." Official sanction was given to various forms of Buddhism, to Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans, to Orthodox Missions from Russia, to semi-religious philosophical and ethical systems like Taoism and Confucianism, even to Mohammedanism, most militant of all religions which, perhaps in return for this recognition, showed itself less aggressive in China than elsewhere.

The Mohammedan Rebellions must not be regarded as religious wars. They originated in political rivalries

⁹⁵ *China and Religion*, by E. H. Parker.

and mercenary disputes and were crushed by the Government because they interfered with state policy and public order. Though tens of thousands were slain in these bitter struggles, the survivors suffered no religious persecution. Their faith—the Faith of the Prophet—remains to this day a living force in China, with deeper roots than any other foreign teaching introduced into the country, save only Buddhism, and the last Manchu Emperors ruled almost as many Moslem subjects as the Sultan of Turkey and the Shah of Persia together.⁹⁶ Over 10,000 Moslems live in Peking. The brass crescent of the Mohammedan meat seller may be seen on many a butcher's stall, while the followers of the Prophet to this day have almost a monopoly of the caravan trade to and from the capital.

For their spiritual needs we find many mosques scattered over the city—the Chinese say 40, but this is probably an exaggeration. The most famous and one of

⁹⁶ "It is a remarkable thing that the Chinese histories record not a single word about the introduction of Mohammedanism. We only know in a general way that Islam spread over . . . Asia in the ninth and tenth centuries and that the Mohammedan faith had already established a firm foothold in China in the time of Kublai Khan who, after his accession, issued a decree requiring that Mussulmans and other persons of foreign religions should do their share of military duty."—(Parker). There is a legend that the first mosque in China, "The Mosque of Holy Remembrance," was built at Canton by the maternal uncle of Mohammed. Among the best reference books on this interesting subject are : *Islam in China*, by Marshall Broomhall, *Origine de l'Islamisme en Chine*, by Deveria, *Le Mahométisme en Chine*, by De Thiersant, and *China and Religion*, by E. H. Parker.

the oldest (built in A.D. 1764 by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung for his Mohammedan concubine) formerly stood on the Ch'ang An Chieh facing the Presidential Gate.⁹⁷ Its worshippers claimed descent from the Prophet himself, through the Khoja of Kashgar and Ili, and were brought to Peking as prisoners of war after the famous campaign of Ch'ien Lung's general Tsao Hui in Chinese Turkestan. The best known "Li Pai Ssü"⁹⁸ or "Temple of Ritual Worship" still standing, is the one in the Niu Chieh (Cow Street), south-east of the Chang Yi Mên in the Chinese city. It well repays the trouble of a visit, preferably on Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, when the principal service is held at two o'clock in the afternoon.

The Moslems who crowd the lane are indistinguishable in dress from the bulk of the population. Likewise the mosque from the exterior is indistinguishable from a Chinese temple. This is disappointing to the visitor who may be expecting something like St. Sophia on a smaller scale. But in China native influence invariably modified what was borrowed from other nations, hence domes are replaced by Chinese roofs and minarets by square towers.

We enter by a small gate, passing an open mortuary with stone slabs where the bodies of the Moslem dead

⁹⁷ See beginning of Chapter V.

⁹⁸ The word "Li-pai" for "worship" was first used by Mohammedans and was then adopted by Protestant Missionaries who introduced this expression for "Sunday" and for "a week."

lie wrapped in winding sheets, awaiting burial.⁹⁹ Polite attendants, some of whom show distinct traces of Arab blood, lead us to the Hall of Prayer, a Ming building, repaired and redecorated. A venerable old man, who might be mistaken for a prophet, requests us to remove our shoes and ushers us in, holding up the heavy blue door curtain. After the full blaze of the sun, the filtered light from the *musharabieh*-screened windows, reminiscent of mosques in Spain, is dim as moonshine. For a minute or two we distinguish nothing but gleams of gilding in a soft gloom. Then we perceive rows of wooden pillars dividing the room into naves and at the farthest end, facing the entrance and looking toward Mecca, the *mihrab* or "Wang yu lou" (the altar)—a small platform with symbolic globe-shaped boxes on either side. In the right hand corner a flight of steps leads to a pulpit on which stands a box containing the Koran. The walls and arches, especially on the west side, the Mecca side, are adorned with sentences from this Sacred Book written in Arabic script, since it has never been translated into Chinese.¹⁰⁰ Glass and horn lanterns hang from the low ceiling to light the services held before dawn and after

⁹⁹ The Moslem Chinese are the only Chinese who bury without a coffin. But coffins are on hire at the mosques and are regularly requisitioned for funerals to carry the body to the grave in the same way as a hearse is hired in Western countries.

¹⁰⁰ The translation of the Koran into any language is forbidden. So is the use of any human or animal symbol in the decoration of a mosque. The tortuous, bewildering curves which surround and embellish the texts are therefore adaptations of leaf and flower forms.

dark. The severe simplicity of this dignified interior contrasts strongly with the sanctuary of a Buddhist or Taoist temple full of gilded images, dusty offerings and gaudy hangings. The single piece of furniture in the place is a Chinese wooden table near the entrance with the conventional "Set of Three" (San Shih), the triple incense burning apparatus consisting of the tripod urn, the round box and the vase to hold tools, in front of an Imperial tablet with the inscription "wan sui, wan wan sui"—"a myriad years, a myriad myriad years." The presence of insignia smacking of idolatry surprises us, till our guide says that such were prescribed for every temple, no matter what the doctrine, as a pledge of the loyalty of the worshippers, and constituted the "official permit" to worship.

While we examine these things, the faithful straggle in from the side rooms where they have performed special ablutions—men only. Women are not admitted, as their presence is contrary to the Mohammedan tenets. Does not the Koran say: "No woman, save her husband of his goodness bring her, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," thus depriving her of a separate identity in matters religious?

In long gowns and white turbans, or green conical caps which the owners have earned the right to wear by making a pilgrimage to Mecca, the congregation follows the service in Arabic, with a devotion and solemnity very different from the careless worshippers at other Chinese temples. At frequent intervals the faithful bow their heads,

then their whole bodies, then, kneeling, touch the floor with their foreheads. Again, standing with fingers outstretched and thumbs on the lobes of their ears, with hands clasped on the breast or laid upon the knees, they continue their prostrations, proving that, though the Arabian sects rather despise these co-religionists for practising a debased form of the pure belief, still they are devout in their fashion.

The main hall is faced by a square tower where the Muezzin follows the beautiful Moslem custom of calling to prayer. Side rooms are reserved for the priest and his little scholars. In the pretty courtyard the pupils romp, and many happy childhoods are spent there under the kindly eye of the teacher who is a teacher only, and not, in the English sense of mastery, a master. Year after year the little ones play till they grow too big for games and leave the shelter of the courtyard to begin the bitter work of life, and to become the fathers and mothers of children whom they send to play in their stead.

. . .

Quite another order of religious faith is embodied in Lamaism, a decadent, repulsive yet picturesque form of Buddhism imported from Thibet. Though there are no Chinese Lamas, all of the sect, including Living Buddhas, being Mongols or Thibetans, there are several Lama temples in Peking.

The most interesting is the Yung Ho Kung, one of the famous sights of the capital, situated in a sheltered and sunny corner of the city at the end of the Hata Mên

street near the north wall. Commonly known as "The Lama Temple," the proper word to describe it is really monastery or "gompa," a Thibetan word signifying "Solitary Place" which we should translate as cloister, for it is not a temple in the true sense of the term, since the public does not worship there. In olden times, to enter the precincts was difficult and to depart from them—harder still. One Russian did indeed visit the Lamasery several times, using a box of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, of which the Living Buddha of the day was very fond, as a passport. But even he had gate after gate shut in his face when he tried to leave, whilst fierce monks jeeringly asked how much he would pay to get each opened.¹⁰¹

An exception was made at the yearly festival of the Devil Dance (held on the 30th of the first moon) when the "gompa" was open to Chinese. On this occasion a huge crowd still gathers. After a long interval of waiting, patiently endured, several beings half-human, half-devil, suddenly hurl themselves into the very midst of the expectant throng. Their costumes are weird, resembling those of Red Indian medicine men. Death's head masks cover their faces, painted flames lick their limbs from foot to knee, and in their hands they carry fearsome-looking long-lashed whips to be used in clearing a space for the

¹⁰¹ Endless stories were told of the brutality and effrontery of the priests, some of which form the basis of that thrilling romance, *The Swallow's Wing*, by Hannan, which reads so very like truth to those who penetrated within the Yung Ho Kung in the early days of 1901 when it was first thrown open to the world by the armies of eight nations.



INCENSE BURNER—YUNG HO KUNG.

dance. With demoniacal yells they dash about, pushing back the crowd and beating the unwary till they have made sufficient room. Then from the temple emerges a strange procession of dancers. They wear vestments of many colours and huge ghastly masks of bird or beast. To the slow and measured cadence of unmelodious music, "to the sound of hand drums and great drums, small flutes and great flutes, and pandean pipes of a form unknown to Western Pan," they advance in fours bowing and circling, their heads lolling from side to side with the time and the movements of their bodies. The performance lasts for hours to the immense delight of the crowd which, regardless of the attentions of the long-whipped devils,¹⁰² draws closer in an ever diminishing circle in its eagerness to see, and culminates in the cutting up of an effigy of the Evil Spirit.

To-day the mystery of the Yung Ho Kung, so long guarded by the Lamas with all their material and spiritual resources, is unveiled, and all may enter who choose at any time. Though the inevitable attraction of the taboo no doubt did much to establish the reputation of the monastery among foreigners, this reputation had other more solid foundations. As the former residence of a Living Buddha—a God Incarnate from the Lamaistic point of view—as the home of a large community of priests (about 1,500 resident and non-resident) belonging to the Yellow or orthodox sect, the place possessed great

¹⁰² Though often unpleasant, it is considered lucky to be struck by the whips.

religious importance, while its political prominence was also considerable owing to the official patronage of the Chinese Emperors who granted the monks many privileges, such as permission to speak with the Sovereign face to face, besides lands and revenues. Thus the Throne hoped to profit in return by the goodwill of the Order whose influence throughout Thibet and Mongolia is enormous, and to strengthen its hold thereby over those distant provinces.

The days of prosperity are gone now. Imperial grants have ceased. The fixed tribute from the Mongol Banner Corps in Peking no longer pours its golden stream into the temple coffers. The Republic gives but a meagre pittance in support of the monks. Moreover, such revenues as remain the Chancha Khutukhtu, no longer a resident in the Yung Ho Kung, uses for his own purposes instead of for repairs.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ The Chancha Khutukhtu is the first of the Living Buddhas of the capital and ranks fourth among the pontiffs of the Lama hierarchy, being less important only than the Dalai Lama and the Panch'eng Erdeni Lama of Thibet, and the Cheptsung Tampa Khutukhtu of Outer Mongolia. (The total number of "Khutukhtus" registered in the Chinese official records is about 160 in Thibet, Mongolia and Peking). The Chancha Khutukhtus have resided in Peking since the seventeenth century, the first re-incarnation having been sent from Thibet during the reign of K'ang Hsi in 1691. He resides at present in the Sung Chu Ssü, a Lama monastery dating from the Ming dynasty and situated north of the Imperial City. Though less famous and smaller than the Yung Ho Kung, it is kept in better repair thanks to the presence of the Living Buddha. The actual Khutukhtu, a wilful young Thibetan, when he gives his rare audiences, appears in semi-royal state with a large retinue, and the deference with which the Republican Government treats him and the distinctions conferred upon him honour in his person the Lamaist Order. Indeed his position and the pomp surrounding him give a better idea of the vitality of his faith than the declining grandeur of the Yung Ho Kung.

A pathetic notice warns the visitor to avoid certain buildings for "fear of dangers" and sets him thinking how the Lamas have grown careless about preserving their past. Nevertheless we must not conclude from these outward signs of ruin that the old monastery is without consideration. Far from it. In the dilapidated guest rooms many a Mongol prince lodges when he comes from the steppes, and the temples remain, even in their decline, the spiritual and communal centre of Mongolian life in the Chinese capital.

Originally the Yung Ho Kung was the palace of the Emperor Yung Cheng, transformed for religious uses on his accession (1722) in accordance with the Chinese precedent that the birthplace of a sovereign shall never afterwards be used as a dwelling. The spacious grounds, the fine halls each divided from its successor by hand some courtyards, are worthy of their traditions, no less so the entrance avenue with its yellow-topped *p'ai lous*. Here, in the shade of spreading trees where magpies and big black crows hold their parliaments, we see monks telling their beads. From the dwelling quarters, the low buildings on the right, one runs to offer us a figure carved in wood from Thibet, so he says, at five times its value, and, to our surprise, urges us to buy in a few words of broken English. Greed has stimulated these Mongols, who do not trouble even to learn Chinese, to find a means of communication with the foreigner. We can read in their disagreeable accents and vulgar gestures that the priests are lazy, ignorant and of low social standing. Yet

men who know the community well, scholars who have the freedom of the library of the monastery, assure us that it includes some shining exceptions—Lamas of genuine religious feeling and vast erudition, who are consulted and held in good repute.

In the first courtyard at the end of the avenue stand two bronze lions, the male with a ball under his paw, the female with a cub—both renowned specimens of casting.¹⁰⁴ They guard the first of the prayer halls where sits Pu Tai, the Laughing Buddha, once a monk and the friend of little children. His cheerful face is familiar, for there is hardly a temple where this popular god is not worshipped in China or in Japan.¹⁰⁵ Enthroned in the vestibule of the monastery, Pu Tai is the herald of more serious gods. Passing through his ante-chamber, we cross a courtyard containing a large tablet with the history of Lamaism inscribed upon its four sides in four languages—Chinese, Manchu, Mongol and Thibetan—and a celebrated bronze incense burner eight feet high.

¹⁰⁴ Such semi-mythical monsters, carved in stone, cast in bronze or fashioned in cloisonné, are commonly found before the entrances of important buildings in Peking. Their living prototypes, both male and female, are supposed by the Chinese to secrete milk in their paws. Hence the representation of the female holding a cub underfoot to feed it. The male, free from maternal cares, is said to occupy his leisure and preserve his manly strength by playing with the ball. Within the last 50 years, the primitive inhabitants of the mountains of Korea, like the early Chinese, placed silken spheres near the supposed haunts of these monsters at night, returning next day to gather them up and distil from the toys, which the lions had obligingly rolled to and from with their paws, the "lion's milk" so valued as medicine.

¹⁰⁵ In the latter country he appears as Hotei, the merry monk with the hempen bag from which he takes his name, endowed with national traits in that spirit of playful reverence which characterises the Japanese artist.

In the two halls beyond — immense rectangular apartments filled with the sweet scent of incense—gilded bronze figures of Celestial Buddhas are enthroned, gods with flaming aureoles and hands uplifted in blessing or clasped in prayer. Their altars are enriched by many treasures—by fine Ch'ien Lung cloisonné, by splendid Yung Cheng enamels, by beautiful silken carpets made at Ninghsia beyond the wild Ordos country, by numbers of Thibetan and Mongol pictures spirited in design, and in colouring so like the Italian Primitives.

What may be called the main sanctuary lies still further back, in the heart of the enclosure. We go in expecting to see huge and splendid effigies—only to find ourselves face to face with a very small Buddha draped in a yellow satin cape and hood. He is not impressive like the larger idols, but he is very, very sacred—the most sacred image within the walls. Many years ago he appeared in a dream to an emperor who thereupon sent a holy monk to the borders of Thibet to find him. But when the monk reached the designated temple, it was empty. Presently he heard a small voice speaking. “Here I am,” it said, directing him to a wall. The monk then removed the bricks and freed the Buddha. Fearful of losing the precious image, he tied it upon his back and started on his long journey homeward through Siberia. Now the people of that country spoke a strange language which the holy man could not understand, and at first he was often puzzled how to ask his way. The little god, however, easily learned the difficult tongue to

help the friend who had released him, and when they reached the great capital at last, the monk recounted how he had received miraculous aid. Thus the image became known as the "Little Buddha Who Speaks Russian." The gods forget nothing, so the priests tell us, that he has kept his talent to this day. Try him and see!

Services open to visitors are held in this hall every day. The Lamas present a very impressive appearance as they walk out from their cells¹⁰⁶ into the sunlight in their yellow helmet-shaped caps, supposed to have been originally copied from the sacred peak of the Central Asian mountain, Chin Shan, and their orange or brick-red vestments which set off so well the bronzed Oriental flesh tints. Slowly they file into the sanctuary and take their places. When the abbot, who sits in the centre of the community, lifts the bunch of peacock's feathers from a vase by his side there is a sudden burst of strange music, a clashing of cymbals, a beating of drums, a blowing of trumpets and conch shells. He intones a kind of Gregorian chant, and the monks, facing each other like singing-men in a choir, recite the litany moving their hands and fingers in various mystic ways meanwhile. The endless repetition of the same prayer is supposed to have a beneficial effect in withdrawing the mind from

¹⁰⁶ These cells have neither chimneys nor adequate windows. The filth is indescribable from centuries of foul living, and one cannot help feeling that these hidden places have been, and still are, the scenes of unnatural piety and crime.

worldly thought, but does in fact seem rather to deaden and hypnotise it, rendering the participant incapable of any serious meditation whatever. As the monks sway rhythmically, slouching on their kneeling-cushions, it is plainly evident that the appearance of the visitor in the doorway interests them far more than their devotions. Still, despite their drowsy inattention, we must admit the service is impressive, especially on great festivals, when the magnificent litany of the Maidari is sung by the monks in perfect time and with extraordinary low devotional tones, acquired when the voice is breaking.

The deepest bass of the West could not reach the notes on which the high priest chants the opening phrases of the magic formula enabling the "Sor"¹⁰⁷ to overpower the Spirits of Evil :—

"O Sor, who turneth to dust all those who have sinned !

O Sor, who turneth to dust all the detestable enemies of the Faith !"

Then, when he lifts the pyramid high above his head the first time, the chorus answers in his name :—

"I, the Yogatsari, I throw the Sor,

The awful Sor that is sharper than the point of a spear,
Whose dreadful force surpasses even the thunder !"

¹⁰⁷ The "Sor" is a pyramid of dough, painted red and decorated with flame and flower motifs. On the top is a representation, also in dough, of a human skull. The whole constitutes a talisman against evil (the Manchu Emperors, for instance, sometimes had the "Sor" incantations read before starting on military expeditions)—also a mystical offering to the Buddha-Maitreya.

Again the abbot lifts the pyramid, again the chant recommences :—

"I, the Yogatsari, I throw the Sor!
That which I throw is not for the Gods that dwell in the
Worlds above,
Neither for the Dragon Kings that dwell in the Worlds beneath,
Nor for the Spirits that float in space twixt earth and heaven,
Nor for the Lords of the land and the waters—
I, the Yogatsari, I throw the Heavenly Sor
To crush the fierce foes who rend our souls
And place obstacles before the mighty Faith,
To paralyse the demons who trouble our spirits!"

And when, at last, having lifted it for the third time, he throws it into a flaming pyre, the Lamas conclude with the terrific peroration which might pour from the lips of some old Hebrew prophet :—

"I, the Yogatsari, have thrown the dreadful Sor!
O, Keepers of the Gates, fling wide your doors!—
Yea, they have been opened, and the truth marches out like
a triumphant army.
Guardians of Hell, seize and imprison all our enemies that
have form and substance!
Keepers of the Doors of Hell, close the doors upon them,
Yea, close even the crevices therein!—
Now the Doorkeepers have closed the smallest cracks
And imprisoned all spiritual obstacles—to set us free!"

The service as a whole reminds one superficially of masses in St. Peter's or other Roman churches.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ In outward forms there are certain striking resemblances, which it would be interesting to trace to their beginning, between the Roman Catholic Mass and the Lama service. "The Lamas have the crosier, the mitre, the cope, the service with responses, the censor, the blessing with outstretched hands on the head of the faithful, the rosary and the processional. I have even seen Lama priests administer absolution to pilgrims. After having purified himself by prayer in the court of the temple, the penitent is admitted to the altar, and there a Lama marks his breast with a square seal with Sanscrit characters."—Choutze. *Tour du Monde* 1876.

Most famous among the sights of the Yung Ho Kung is the huge gilded Buddha of the Resurrection (Maitreya) carved from the trunk of a single Yunnan cedar. His gigantic figure towers up through three stories and is by actual count 75 feet high, though the Lamas say he is the height of 70 elbows, the stature which, according to their belief, we shall all attain at our perfect re-incarnation.¹⁰⁹

"Big Buddha, see Big Buddha," says a noisy, impudent Lama boy as he pushes one into the hall and holds out his hand for a tip, though well aware that visitors are expressly asked not to expend more than the price of their entrance ticket. In the semi-darkness the cruel and vindictive countenance of Maitreya looms above us with the lamp over his head—formerly lit when the Emperor visited the temple—and the silk scarf in his hands presented to him by the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi. How remote and unsympathetic he seems, how detached from the worship that goes on around him!

Ascending a crooked, rickety staircase to get a better idea of the size of the image and enjoy the view over the beautiful roof of the main hall, with dormer windows diversifying its lines, we pass a gigantic prayer wheel.

¹⁰⁹ "The difference between Lamaism and the ordinary form of Chinese Buddhism is shown by a characteristic detail—their discordant conception of Maitreya, the Coming Buddha. The Chinese represent him as an obese figure of small stature. The Lamas on the contrary, portray him as a colossal figure, robed as a prince, with the jewelled coronet of a *bodhisat*."—Bushell.

This is simply a cylindrical chest full of written prayers revolving on an axis, and one turn is considered equivalent to reciting the thousands of petitions it contains—a labour-saving device that appeals strongly to the indolent devotees of an inert belief.

The idea of relying upon such mechanical, meaningless supplications, unaccompanied by the devotion of the heart, is repellent to those who think it is not so important what a man worships, as whether he worships honestly at all.

Behind this sanctuary we come to the last of the central temples. It contains images of the three "Taras," Goddesses of Wisdom. "They are seated upon lotus flowers, the lotus flowers of the Apparitional Birth, and the light grace of their limbs folded within the petals, the suppleness of the fingers numbering the numbers of the Good Law, were ideals possibly inspired in some forgotten time by the charm of an Indian dancing girl." According to Lamaist tradition, Catherine the Great is supposed to be one of the re-incarnations of the goddess on the right, and the same legend is sometimes connected with the name of Queen Victoria.

There are many lesser shrines, so many that to enumerate all their deities would only weary the reader unfamiliar with the complicated ritual of Lamaism. But in nearly all these side halls there is something worth seeing—in one, for instance, the famous jade and gold Buddha. Notice also the wooden figure behind it, for the priests say that it was taken from the waters

of the Pei Hai after an emperor saw a wonderful light hovering over the spot where it lay hidden.¹¹⁰

In another room stands a golden model of paradise, and in a third the likenesses of two hippopotami who tried to kill Ch'ien Lung when he was out hunting—beasts scarcely less fierce and quaint than the statues of four green-faced guardsmen who bested them and saved their sovereign's life.

The fortunate visitor may chance upon a secondary service in one of these side halls, sometimes held simultaneously to that conducted in the main building by young monks murmuring their appointed prayers with wandering eyes. These chapels are full of tawdry paintings of demons and she-devils, freaks of diabolical imagination, all part of the spurious apparatus of terrorism of a religion whose hold is the hold of fear. Obscene figures of hideous deities draped in yellow silk shawls, saints wearing pointed caps, are seated upon throne chairs or stand upon the altar among symbols such as conch shell trumpets, lamps and wine cups made from human skulls, and other strange things of which the priests themselves often do not know the meaning.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ The legend of the miraculous light appearing over the Pei Hai is told of various sovereigns and different treasures. See "Summer Palace" chapter.

¹¹¹ To understand the meanings of all these symbols fully would require years of study and an exhaustive library of rare books to draw upon. Waddell's *Buddhism in Thibet*, however, gives many interesting details on Lamaism, and *The Unveiling of Lhasa* by Edmund Candler—some picturesque descriptions of life and lamaseries in Thibet.

Among these Lamas, more's the pity, the grosser forms of demonology and superstition, introduced from the dread cult of Shiva, have overlaid the nobility of the original Buddhist conception.

From the unwholesome moral atmosphere of the Yung Ho Kung we turn almost with relief and go on to the Confucian Temple near by. How different are these quiet courts dedicated to calm and comfortable doctrines!

Though the "Ta Ch'eng Miao"¹¹² is called a temple for want of a better name, the term is no more exact than the word "religion" applied to the cult it serves. Confucius, its founder, who lived when the Jews returned from Babylon and Greece was invaded by Xerxes, posed as no Messiah and arrogated to himself no divinity. He even denied any merits of discovery or invention but taught confessedly and designedly only a system of morals. What he really did was to revivify ancient ideas, to arrange them in orderly form and then to make known to his contemporaries and transmit to his successors the theories and practices with which he had become acquainted by studious research. Hence his rites include neither priests nor images of gods, but are in fact simply a variation of the cult of ancestor worship—the foundation of many Eastern religions and the cement which has held together Chinese society, on the whole sober and law-abiding, through so many vicissitudes.

¹¹² "Miao" is the general term for "temple," "Ssü" being specially applied to Buddhist sanctuaries, and "Kuan" to Taoist shrines. "T'an" means "altar."



COURTYARD IN THE LAMA TEMPLE (YUNG HO KUNG)

For us Westerners it is difficult to assign to this great Sage his proper place, and still more difficult to appreciate a power in his principles sufficient to make them an ideal for public and private life in China among the learned and aristocratic, the scholars and officials, no less than among the simple people, for 2,000 years. Probably he should rank with Plato as one of the world's greatest teachers, though Plato's precepts, if deeper and higher, never had the binding force for his disciples that those of Confucius had for his. The latter's influence is doubtless largely due to the fact that he set forth in cultivated form practical solutions for practical problems.¹¹³

To this day his precepts remain a living factor in China. Millions of Chinese are good Buddhists or Taoists, yet profess his teachings, and every city has a temple in his honour.¹¹⁴

That in the capital, though similar in construction to many others, is exceptionally fine. First built on its

¹¹³ The subject of Confucianism is too large to be treated here. Those interested should read *China and Religion*, by Parker, *Confucianism and Taoism*, by Douglas, Professor Legge's *Religions of China*, also his *Imperial Confucianism* and his master-work *The Chinese Classics*, or Faber's *Digest of the Doctrines of Confucius*. Most valuable of all are the standard translations of Confucius' own works for, though some of his sayings are going out of fashion, his doctrine is still a key to a large section of Chinese thought.

¹¹⁴ This fact illustrates the conservative vitality of Confucianism without indicating a weakness in the other faiths. The Master, with complete toleration, never discouraged his followers from practising religion. Buddhists and Taoists on their side, regarding Confucianism as an ethical system only, do not forbid their converts to follow its rites. Mohammedanism and Christianity, however, being themselves complete rules of life, will not allow this.

present site under the Yuan Dynasty, about the end of the thirteenth century, it has been remodelled and rebuilt many times. The present great hall is probably Ming.

After seeing so many of the beautiful monuments in Peking partially ruined, after hearing everywhere the cry of poverty which prevents repairs, it is refreshing to find this holy place kept in good order, showing no material degeneration from its ancient glory. Just as the doctrines have remained undimmed in their passage down the years, so the roofs glisten with perfect tiles that swim in a golden bath of sunbeams, while the painting on the eaves is fresh and clean and the tablet over the door newly gilded.¹¹⁵ Even the sacrifices in honour of the Sage are still continued in the second month of spring and again in the second month of autumn. The elaborate and most reverent tributary service usually takes place at three or four o'clock in the morning, but it is sometimes possible to obtain admittance to the rehearsal at a more reasonable hour the day before.

Certain officials are designated to burn incense and prostrate themselves before the tablet of the Sage, while the chief officiant reads an address from a scroll which is afterwards placed in a casket on the altar. The first part of the ceremony takes place inside the hall but the latter half is performed in the courtyard outside. Here groups of musicians in Ming costumes, such as one sees

¹¹⁵ Extensive repairs were made by Yuan Shih-k'ai who appropriated \$50,000 for them.

on old porcelains and screens, play the six hymns in praise of Confucius, known as the "Odes to Peace." The Master was a great lover and patron of music, wherefore his spirit must find delight in them, for they are rendered exactly as they used to be 20 centuries ago. Many of the accompanying instruments are hundreds of years old and played only on such great occasions, but their forms are older still. Such are the carved frame supports for musical stones, the drums on stands curiously and beautifully wrought, the lutes with silken strings, the *yueh-chin* or "full moon guitar," the *yang-chin* or dulcimer, the *sang* or organ flute with 13 reeds, and the straight flutes and flutes played with the nose.

Visitors enter by a gate at the west side of the enclosure. Near the entrance, among cypresses whose gigantic girth carries us back to a distant age (they are said to have been planted under the Sung dynasty), stand graceful tablets of stone, erected to over a hundred scholars who have distinguished themselves at the Triennial Examinations during the past five or six centuries. The oldest dates from 1351.

Under a covered gateway, inside the small entrance to the main quadrangle, are 10 black stone drums about three feet high—mountain boulders roughly hewn into this shape. They are supposed to date from the Chou dynasty (1122-255 B.C.). For many years these cherished relics of antiquity lay half buried in some waste land in the province of Shensi. A poet, Han Yü, famous in his day, implored that they be moved to a place of safety,

and about A.D. 820 they were set up in the Confucian temple of Fêng Hsiang Fu. During the period of the Five Dynasties (A.D. 907-960) they were again lost, but a prefect under the Sung (A.D. 960-1260) found nine out of the 10 and put them in his house. Finally in A.D. 1052 the missing one was recovered and when the Sung emperor, fleeing from the Khitan Tartars, made his capital in the province of Honan, a hall was especially built in the palace to contain them. They rested there a few years only, for the Nüchen Tartars sacked the city in 1126, dug out the gold inlay with which the inscriptions had been filled in (to betoken their value and at the same time to prevent their injury by the hammer when taking rubbings), and carried off the drums to their own central capital, the modern Peking.¹¹⁶

The records on these monoliths have always been of the most profound interest to archaeologists. Chiselled in the primitive seal characters, they are said by scholars to be the oldest relics of Chinese writing extant, but

¹¹⁶ "The Chinese obtain facsimile rubbings of inscriptions with sheets of thin, tough, cohesive paper, moistened and applied evenly to the surface of stone or bronze. The paper is first hammered in by a wooden mallet, a piece of felt being interposed to prevent injury to the object, and afterwards forced into every crevice and depression by a brush with long soft bristles. It is finally peeled off, imprinted with a perfect and durable impression of the inscription which comes out, of course, in white reverse on a black ground. Very often on old stone tablets one finds dark shadows of ink, showing that an amateur of writing has taken a rubbing of some specially fine characters of the inscription."—Bushell.

were probably copied from ideographs on still more ancient bronze vessels.¹¹⁷ The inscriptions comprise a series of 10 odes, a complete one being cut on each drum, and their stanzas in irregular verse celebrate the hunting expedition of a feudal prince about 1000 B.C. when the Aryans were conquering India, when David reigned in Israel and Homer sang in Greece.

Many sinologues have differed in deciphering what is almost undecipherable, and many poets have given their best inspirations in praise of these three thousand year old stones, blackened from repeated rubbings, from the time of Han Yü who laments that the sixth drum has been hollowed by some vandal for pounding rice, to the Emperor Ch'ien Lung whose verses in proof of their authenticity are engraved on a large marble tablet.

Beyond the stone drums, we find ourselves in a lovely courtyard dotted with six yellow-tiled pavilions, with slabs resting on turtle backs, recording foreign conquests of the Emperors K'ang Hsi, Yung Cheng and Ch'ien Lung. Just as the Emperors of Japan to this day announce their victories before the tablets of the Imperial Ancestors, so these old Emperors brought to the

¹¹⁷ "Chinese script was undoubtedly ideographic in origin, the earliest characters being more or less exact reproductions of objects: the phonetic element was not adopted till much later, in the same natural course of development which analogous scripts have undergone in other parts of the world. This is indicated by the name of 'picture of the object' given to the primitive characters, which are said to have been invented by Ts'ang Hsien, and to have replaced the knotted cords and notched tallies previously used, like the *quipos* of the ancient Peruvians, for recording events."—Bushell.

manes of Confucius the report of their successes with the happy certainty that the great dead continue their interest in the fortunes of the living.¹¹⁸

Three flights of steps lead from the courtyard to the main building, the "Hall of the Great Perfection," with a renowned "spirit stairway" in the centre.

The proportions of the hall itself are more beautiful even than those of the finest temples in Kyoto, and it gives an admirable impression of space and intellectual repose. We enter feeling under our feet a softness of coir matting thick as moss. Within all is austere and pure; there are no images, no ornaments, no symbols—except the vermilion lacquer tablet dedicated to "the most holy ancestral teacher Confucius," the four smaller tablets in which reposes the spiritual essence of the Master's Four Great Disciples (Tseng Tzŭ, who wrote the "Great Learning," the first of the Four Books, Meng Tzŭ who wrote the fourth, Tzŭ Ssŭ, grandson of the sage, who wrote the "Doctrine of the Mean," and Yen Tzŭ whose conversations with the Master are recorded in the "Analects"), while the Eight Lesser Disciples have smaller tablets in the background. The stately rows of massive pillars were hung

¹¹⁸ The tablets commemorate :—

Conquest of Western Mongolia. K'ang Hsi 1704.

Conquest of Eastern Thibet. Yung Cheng 1726.

Conquest of the Miao Country. Ch'ien Lung 1750.

Conquest of Sungaria, land of the Kalmuks. Ch'ien Lung 1760.

Conquest of Eastern Turkestan. Ch'ien Lung 1760.

Expeditions to Szechuan and Yunnan. Ch'ien Lung 1777.

with laudatory couplets, and the beams with dedicatory inscriptions, one of which was penned by each succeeding emperor in token of his veneration of the Sage. The latter¹¹⁹ have been removed in deference to Republican susceptibilities. Only the tablet presented by President Li Yuan-hung is left hanging high up, its text of gold shining in the dim light.

Visitors usually go to see the Hall of Classics, or Kuo Tzŭ Chien, to the immediate west of the Confucian Temple, the same day.¹²⁰ Originally a simple school under the Mongol dynasty, it was converted into a national university by Yung Loh. The Emperor went there in the second month to expound the Classics, seated upon a throne in the central hall, or Pi Yung Kung, with a famous screen behind him fashioned in the form of the five sacred mountains. The ancient cypresses in the garden were planted by a teacher of the Mongol era, but the Hall of Classics is not the original Yuan building, having been erected by Ch'ien Lung after the ancient model. It is a lofty square edifice with a double eaved

¹¹⁹ The finest was composed of four bold characters: "Wan Shih Shih Pao," "The Model Teacher of a Myriad Ages," written by K'ang Hsi and authenticated by his seal. The last of his line, the now deposed child emperor Hsüan T'ung, like his illustrious ancestor, had also contributed his word of praise.

¹²⁰ The padded uniform and iron helmet of the famous general Li Tzŭ-ch'eng, so shaped as to turn the course of arrows, were kept in a small museum of relics near the Kuo Tzŭ Chien. This collection is now stored above the Wu Mên, entrance to the Winter Palace.

roof, surmounted by a large gilt ball and encircled by a verandah supported by wooden pillars—the whole standing in the midst of a circular pond¹²¹ crossed by four marble bridges leading to the central doors.

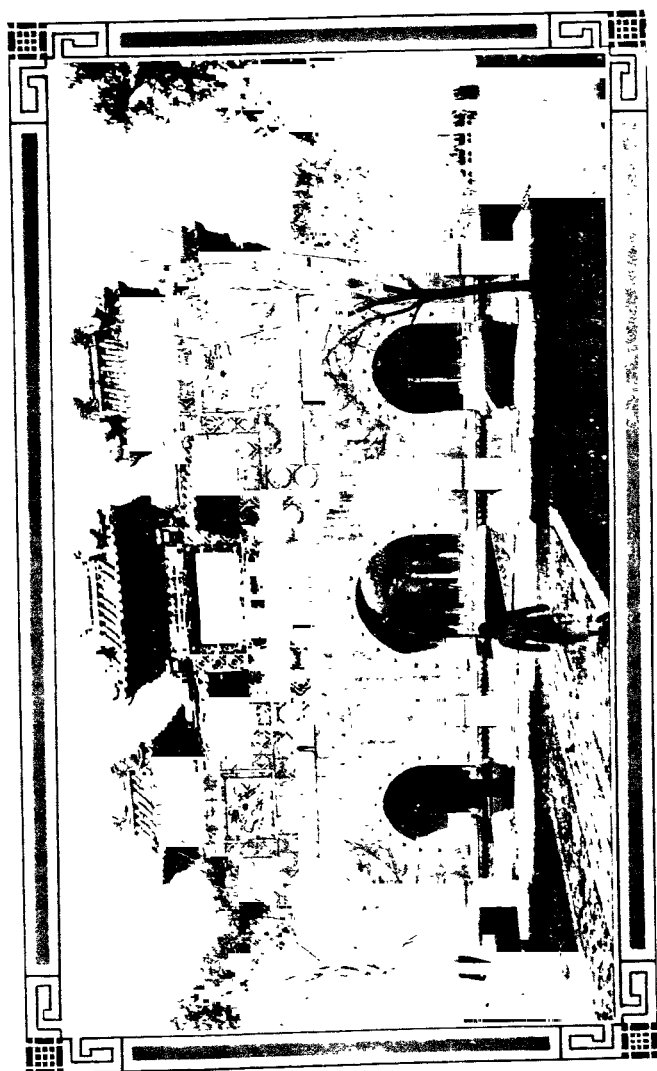
The elegant tracery of the windows, the wide spreading roof and beautiful arrangement of timbers within, as also the complexity of the highly painted eaves outside, make this a fine specimen of Chinese architecture.

Unhappily this hall, though indirectly associated with Confucius, has not been restored like his temple. Dust invades it unhindered, dulling the red lacquer and gilded ornaments.

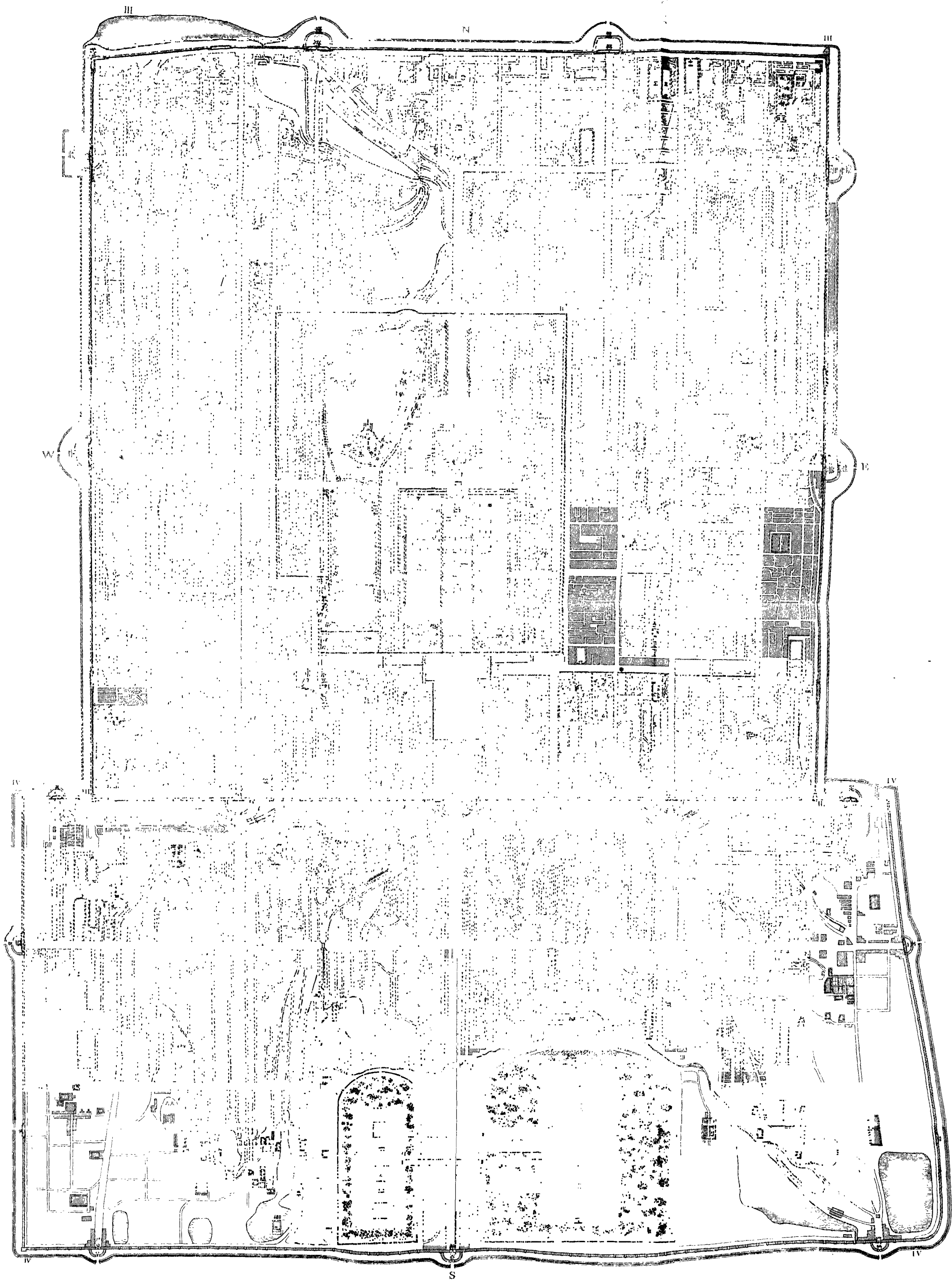
“Why do you not at least clean off this lovely throne?” we inquire of the meek-faced guardian. “Because,” he replies, “if I did, tourists would sit upon the sacred seat, whereas, if left dirty, none will be tempted to do so.” His knowledge of human nature was more exact than his excuse.

Laziness, indeed, was the root of his neglect—laziness—and pride. A true conservative, he resented the intrusion of the foreign vandal in this abode of Chinese culture, and while he led us around the deserted galleries, with their many hundred stone tablets bearing the

¹²¹ This pond used to contain golden carp and fine lotuses. But when the Republic was proclaimed, and a president instead of an emperor appeared in these old precincts, the flowers and fish died—according to legend. At all events, not one blossom or one carp now remains alive there.



"P'ai Lou" Hall of Classics.



THIS Map is a reduced copy of the rare plan first published with a *Description of Peking* by Father Hyacinth Bitchurin of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in 1829. It remains to this day the best map of Peking as regards the historical monuments.

I.—T'ZU CHIN-CH'ENG (FORBIDDEN CITY).

1. Wu-men (gate).
2. Tai-ho-men (gate).
3. Tai-ho-tien (palace hall).
4. Chung-ho-tien (palace hall).
5. Pao-ho-tien (palace hall).
6. Nei-ko (hall formerly used by the Privy Council).
7. Wen-hua-tien (palace hall).
8. Ch'uan-hsin-tien (palace hall).
9. Wen-yuan-ko (library).
10. Kuo-shih-kuan (former State Historiographer's Office).
11. Tung-hua-men (gate).
12. Wu-ying-tien (palace hall) (now Museum).
13. Shang-yi-chien.
14. Hsien-an-kung (palace).
15. Nei-wu-fu (Imperial Household Department).
16. Kuang-ch'u-sü.
17. Nan-hsün-tien (palace hall).
18. Hsi-hua-men (gate).
19. Ch'ien-ch'ing-mien (gate).
20. Ch'ien-ch'ing-kung (palace).
21. Chiao-tai-tien (hall).
22. K'un-ning-kung (palace).
23. K'un-ning-men (gate).
24. Shen-yu-men (gate).
25. Tung-yi-ch'ang-chieh (street).
26. Ch'ien-jen-kung (palace).
27. Ch'eng-ch'ien-kung (palace).
28. Chung-sui-kung.
29. Tung-eh-ch'ang-chieh (street).
30. Yen-hsi-kung (palace).
31. Yung-ho-kung (palace).
32. Chung-yang-kung (palace).
33. Hsiao-ch'ang-chieh (street).
34. Nei-k'u (treasury).
35. Ch'iu-hao-men (gate).
36. T'ien-ch'ün-pao-tien (Temple).
37. Ch'ien-tung-wu so.
38. Chai-kung (palace).
39. Yu-ch'ing-kung (palace); to the south, Tung-pen-tien (hall).
40. Feng-hsien-tien (temple).
41. Ning-shou-kung (palace).
42. Yang-hsing-tien (palace hall).
43. Yang-hsing so.
44. Hsi-yi-ch'ang-chieh (street).
45. Yung-shou-kung (palace).
46. Yi-k'ung-kung (palace).
47. Hsi-eh-ch'ang-chieh (street).
48. Ch'ien-hsien-kung (palace).
49. Ch'ang-ch'ün-kung (palace).
50. Hsien-tu-kung (palace).
51. Ch'ien-hsi-wu so (palace hall).
52. Yang-hsi-tien (palace hall).
53. T'zu-nung-kung (palace).
54. Shou-k'ang-kung (palace hall).
55. Shou-an-kung (palace).
56. Yung-hua-tien (palace).
57. Ch'eng-huang-miao (temple).
58. Lien-fang (store houses).
59. Ch'ih-tzu (female).

II. HUANG-CH'ENG (IMPERIAL CITY).

60. Tai-ch'ing-men, now Chung-hua-mén (formerly Dynastic Gate).

61. T'ien-an-mén (gate).
62. Tuan-mén (gate).
63. T'ai-miao (Temple of Ancestors of the Ch'ing dynasty).
64. She-chi-tan (Altar of Harvests in the present Central Park).
65. Huang-shih-ch'eng. (Repository of Imperial Biographies).
66. P'u-tu-sü (or Mahakala Miao, Lama Temple).
67. Tung-an-mén or Wei-tung-hua-mén (gate).
68. Wu-pei-yuan.
69. Wo-lo-sü-wen kuan (former Russian School).
70. Hsuan-jen-miao (temple of the Spirit of Winds).
71. Ning-ho-miao (temple of the Spirit of Thunder).
72. Sung-chü-sü (Lama Temple, Residence of Living Buddha).
73. Ch'ing-shan or Mei-shan (Coal Hill).
74. Ta-kao-hsuan-tien (palace hall).
75. Wu-yin-tien-ho-tzu-pai-ch'u (former Palace Printing Press).
76. Chao-hsien-miao (temple of the Spirit of Thunder).
77. T'ai-yi-chih. (General name for the three palace lakes, the Nan-hai, the Chung-hai and the Pei-hai).
78. Ying-t'ai, ("Ocean Terrace" in the Nan-hai).
79. Tzu-kuang-ko (palace hall).
80. Chiao-yuan (garden).
81. Chün-ao-yu-tung (bridge).
82. Ch'eng-kuang-tien (palace hall).
83. Yung-an-sü (Temple of the Pao T'ai or White Dagoba).
84. Hsien-ts'ün-tan (Temple to the Patroness of Silkworms).
85. Wu-lung-tung (pavilions).
86. Ch'ang-fu-sü (temple).
87. Hsi-t'ien-fan-ching-ch'ang (Sanskrit Printing Press and temple).
88. Old Pei-tung. (Roman Catholic Cathedral, since demolished).
89. Hsian-mén (gate).
90. Ti-an-mén or Hou-mén (gate).

III. NEI-CH'ENG (MANCHU CITY).

91. Cheng-yang-mén or Ch'ien-mén (gate).
92. Ch'ü-pan-chieh (square).
93. Tsung-jen-tu, the former Imperial Clan Court.
94. La-pu (former Board of Civil Office).
95. Hu-pu (former Board of Revenue).
96. Li-pu (former Board of Ceremonies).
97. Ping-pu (former Board of War).
98. Kung-pu (former Board of Works).
99. Hung-lu-sü (Court of State Ceremonies).
100. Ch'ien-tien-chien (former Board of Astronomy).
101. Tai-yi-yuan (former Board of Medicine).
102. Hui-tung-kuan (former Russian compound and monastery, now part of Russian Legation).
103. Kao-li-kuan (former Russian compound).

104. Hui-tung-kuan or T'ai-tzu-kuan (former Mongol Market).
105. Pei-yu-ho-ch'iao and Nan-yu-ho-ch'iao (bridges over the Jade Canal).
106. Chao-shih-fu (former Imperial Supervisorate of Instruction, now part of Japanese Legation).
107. Former Palace of Prince Su (now part of the Italian and Japanese Legations).
108. Former Han-lin Academy (now part of British Legation).
109. Li-fan-yuan (former Board of Foreign Relations).
110. T'ang-tzu (former Shaman Temple, now part of the Legation Quarter Glacis).
111. Chao-chung-tzu (former temple, now part of the Legation Quarter Glacis).
112. Former Palace of Prince Yu (now part of the Legation Quarter Glacis).
113. Chung-yen-mén or Hata-mén (gate).
114. Pao-tzu-ho (lake).
115. Kuan-hsiang-tai (Observatory).
116. Kuan-yuan (site of former Examination Halls).
117. Hsien-liang-tzu (temple).
118. Former Palace of Prince Yu, present Rockefeller Foundation.
119. Tung-tung (former Roman Catholic Cathedral, requisitioned 1813).
120. Teng-shih or Lantern Market.
121. Lu-mi-ts'ang (store houses for rice).
122. Tung-sü p'ai lou.
123. Lung-fu-sü (Lama Temple).
124. Palace of Prince Yi.
125. Former Palace of Prince Heng.
126. Ch'iao-yuan-mén or Ch'ü-hua-mén (gate).
127. Store houses for rice.
128. Store houses for rice.
129. Tung-chih-mén (gate).
130. Pei-kuan (Russian Ecclesiastical Mission).
131. Palace of the Fourth Prince (now included in the Russian Mission).
132. Fan-chung-kuan (Tibetan Printing Press).
133. Yung-ho-kung (Lama Temple).
134. Confucian Temple.
135. Hall of Classics (Kuo-tzu-chien).
136. An-tung-mén (gate).
137. Shun-tien-tu (Prefectural Office).
138. Hsien-yü-kung (Temple of the Polar Star).
139. Pu-chün-tung-lu-yamen (office of the General Commandant of the Gendarmerie).
140. Wen-nung-ch'iao (bridge).
141. Ku-lou (Drum Tower).
142. Chung-lou (Bell Tower).
143. Tu-ch'ia-yuan (former Censorate).
144. Hsing-pu (former Board of Punishments).
145. Hui-tzu-yung (former Mosque and Mahamudra).
146. Nan-tung (Roman Catholic Cathedral, burnt in 1900 and rebuilt).

147. Hsuan-wu-mén or Shun-chih-mén (gate).
148. Hsiang-fang (former Elephant Quarters).
149. Former Palace of Prince Jung.
150. Shuang-t'a-sü (temple).
151. Tu-ch'eng-huang-miao (former temple to the Guardian Spirit of the City, now a police post).
152. P'u-shou-sü (mosque).
153. Former Palace of Prince Tamosu.
154. Fu-ch'eng-mén or P'ing-tze-mén (gate).
155. Li-tai-ti-wang-miao (Pantheon).
156. P'ai-t'a-sü (White Pagoda, Lama Temple).
157. Hsi-sü p'ai lou.
158. Wai-fan-kung-kuan (former Court of Tributary Nations).
159. Former Palace of Prince Chuang.
160. Hsi-chih-mén (gate).
161. Sui-yuan-kuan (temple).
162. Ch'ung-kuo-sü or Hu-kuo-sü (Lama Temple).
163. T'ê-sheng-mén (gate).
164. Chi-shu-tan, Shih-ch'a-hai and Lien-hua-p'ao-tzu, known under the general name of Chün-ch'eng-hai or "Palace Lakes."

IV.—WAI-CH'ENG (CHINESE CITY).

165. Kuan-yin-ta-shih-miao (Taoist temple).
166. Kuan-ti-miao (Temple of the "God of War").
167. Cheng-yang-ch'iao ("Bridge of Heaven").
168. Chün-yü-ch'ih (gold-fish ponds).
169. Tung-hsiao-shih (market).
170. Chün-chung-miao (temple).
171. T'ien-tan, Temple of Heaven.
 - a. Yuan-ch'ün, Alter of Heaven.
 - b. Huang-ch'ün-yü, temple of Heaven, or the "Imperial World."
 - c. Ch'ien-tien, Temple of the Happy Year.
 - d. Chai-kung, Palace of Purification.
 - e. Huang-ch'ien-tien.
172. Tung-pien-mén (gate).
173. Kuang-chu-mén or Sha-wo-mén (gate).
174. Ch'ang-t'o-mén or Ts'o-an-mén (gate).
175. Yung-tung-mén (gate).
176. Liu-h-ch'ang.
177. Hsi-pien-mén (gate).
178. Kuang-nung-mén or Chang-yi-mén (gate).
179. Fa-yuan-sü (temple).
180. T'ao-yü-tung (temple and pleasure garden).
181. Hsi-tung-tan (temple) (completely destroyed).
182. Hsien-nung-tan (Temple of Agriculture).
183. Shun-chih-tan, Alter to the Spirits of Heaven and Earth.
184. T'ai-sü-tan, Alter to Jupiter.
185. Nü-tan, Alter to Earth.

complete text of the Four Books and the Five Classics,¹²² past the quaint old sundial from which official mean time was formerly taken, to the magnificent procelain *p'ai lou* on the way to the street—his manner plainly showed, despite his eagerness to earn a gratuity, that he considered us interlopers.

¹²² The inscriptions on these upright stone monuments were engraved by order of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, in emulation of the Han and T'ang dynasties, both of which had the canonical books cut in stone at Hsi An Fu, the capital of China in their time. Moreover, they were also intended to form an insurance against the loss of these all-important memoirs of sacred antiquity and against the whims of a second Ch'in Shih Huang Ti. The text is divided on the face of the stone into pages of convenient size, so that rubbings may be taken on paper and bound up in the form of books.

CHAPTER IX.

TEMPLES OF THE IMPERIAL CITY.

IN addition to these three big sanctuaries, there are hundreds of other temples in Peking, less known to Westerners, but famous among the Chinese who, with perfect impartiality, have commemorated every sainted hero by some shrine and propitiated every god by an altar. "The higher minds alone can rest content with abstract imaginings : the lower must have concrete realities on which to pin their faith." Side by side therefore with the pure worship of the Supreme Being, the primitive cult of the Kitchen God has kept its humble clientele.

We find also the remains of a Nature worship from far forgotten ages in the deification of the forces of the universe which man instinctively wondered at or feared : the sun, the stars, the thunder, the rain and the wind—all in short that he heard, saw or felt, yet could not comprehend. As he progressed in civilisation, he clothed his terrors with forms which resemble the human, and appeased them by offerings, invoked them for aid, or thanked them for benefits received.

Each of the Nature Gods had his own distinct personality and his own shrine. The God of Thunder was enthroned in the Ning Ho Miao, the compound with the shining green-tiled roofs to the east of the Palace.

Built about 1770, it has now been diverted from its original purpose and become a prosaic police post. Evidently the thunder bolts of this deity no longer strike terror in men's hearts, since his other shrine, the Lei Shen, or Chao Hsien Miao on the western side of the Forbidden City, dating from the same era, is being used for educational purposes. It is rather pitiful and makes one feel as though a revered tragedian had suddenly lost favour with the public, since his most magnificent gestures no longer have power to thrill an audience.

The God of Rain fares little better. In the Fu Yu Ssü (near the Chao Hsien Miao) where he once lodged, a rival god listens to the prayers that he has every right to think should be intended for his ears. After being dedicated to him in 1723, the temple was first given over to the Buddhists, and later to Lamas in whose charge it still remains. Though somewhat neglected now, the buildings' green and yellow roofs are still a handsome ornament of the quarter near the Hsi Hua Môn, and about 20 Lamas live on the premises which they share with a Chinese school. The valuable library was taken to Japan in 1900. But what cannot be taken away from this temple are the memories of the days, before it belonged even to the poor Rain God, when K'ang Hsi as a child was sent there with his nurse to avoid an epidemic of small-pox in the Forbidden City. He grumbled, as children do, at being separated from his parents and resented the parting even in his old age. But he left a tablet, a throne and a collection of writings

behind him, still on view in the main hall, to atone for his prejudice.

In his religious fervour and constructive energy K'ang Hsi also converted what, under the Mings, was a military depôt into the Buddhist temple of Wan Shou Hsing Lung Ssü which stands just opposite the Fu Yu Ssü on the other side of the street. His inscription attests that this was done in 1700. Gradually this temple grew to be a favourite asylum for the old eunuchs of the Court, and as such enjoyed the favour of the Manchu Emperors, every one of whom, including the now deposed Hsüan T'ung, enriched it with grants and honoured it with tablets. The halls containing interesting Buddhist images—only rarely accessible to strangers by the courtesy of the priests—are well kept and serve as repositories for the magnificent coffins of eunuch patrons. A beautiful catalpa tree¹²³ flowers in the small courtyard, shading an open air theatre where religious plays and pageants take place. The whole atmosphere of the place suggests not action, but contemplation, the Oriental's ideal of life. . . . So the eunuch monks sit in the gardens "when trees are green and bushes soft and wet, when the wind has stolen the shadows of new leaves and the birds linger in the last boughs that bloom," and ponder vaguely upon everything in general—synonym, alas, to man's finite mind for nothing in particular—"till even the sense of self seems to vanish, and through

¹²³ This species of tree provides the favourite and the most expensive wood used for coffins in China.

the mistlike portal of unconsciousness they float out into the vast, undistinguishable sameness of Nirvana's sea."

. . .

The winds have their shrine in the Hsüan Jen Miao, identical in appearance with the Ning Ho Miao, and a little further north on the same street. When it was built in 1738, the southern breezes fanned the handsome altar, and the northern gales whistled round it in triumph, while their brothers of the east and west joined in the revelry. But now they are off on more pressing business in Mongolia and the high seas, and their worshippers have likewise scattered. Empty and forsaken the buildings remain in charge of an official who turns an honest penny by renting them to needy artisans.

Much stronger devotees of nature worship than the Chinese were their Manchu conquerors, descendants of tribes inhabiting the gloomy "taiga" (forest) of a wild land of sudden storms and tremendous natural phenomena. A group of yellow-tiled buildings in the very south-eastern corner of the Imperial city, to which, unfortunately, visitors are not admitted, is the unique shrine of Shamanism, or the "Black Faith," in Peking. Known as the T'ang Tzŭ, or official Shaman temple of the Manchu Court, it has been built to replace the older T'ang Tzŭ, burnt during the Boxer troubles (see "Legation Quarter"). Though no foreigner has ever been admitted to the ceremonies, we know from records that they were the same as those formerly in use at

Mukden. At the moment of sacrifice a "Sama" ("respectable person"), dressed in a robe adorned with dragons, wearing on her head the "t'ien-tzu" and carrying a bell at her girdle, read before the altar of the spirits an allocution drawn up in Manchu, then executed a dance from the old Manchu ritual.¹²⁴ That this rude form of animism—this strange survival of the primitive faith of the aborigines of Siberia, whence sprung the Tunguz forefathers of the Manchus, should persist in the capital of a highly developed civilisation like the Chinese only shows how deep a reverence for their past must have inspired the first Manchu rulers when they built a temple to the religion of their forefathers—and the last when they rebuilt it after a foreign invasion of arms and ideas. A staff of Shamans and Shamanesses (to hold services for the Empress), selected from the families of the Palace guards was maintained till the last days of the Ch'ing rule. Perhaps some still officiate at the Shaman ceremonies in the K'un Ning Kung inside the Forbidden City, though we have no means of ascertaining whether any part of the ritual, which the emperors were once careful to attend in their own persons at the head of the Court, is still preserved.

Not far from the T'ang Tzū is a Lama temple, also closely associated with the Manchu dynasty. This is the

¹²⁴ See *North China*, by Madrolle.

Mahakala Miao which is built on a kind of platform 15 feet above the surrounding houses—an unusual device. The place was originally a Ming palace where the Emperor Cheng T'ung resided on his return from captivity in Mongolia (A.D. 1457).¹²⁵ Under the Manchus, the Pu Tu Ssü became the palace of Prince Jui, the famous Dorgun Ama Wang, fourteenth son of Nurhachi, the most powerful and romantic figure in the Manchu conquest of China. He was the man who entered Peking in triumph, and, according to an agreement with Wu San-kuei, rewarded his own people for their services in helping to suppress Li Tzū-ch'eng's rebellion by establishing a Manchu dynasty. Then, like another Warwick, he turned kingmaker, sent for his six year old nephew, the Emperor of the Manchus, and put him upon the throne under his regency, with the reigning title of Shun Chih.

¹²⁵ The Emperor Cheng T'ung, during whose reign China suffered severely from an invasion of the Mongols, was induced personally to accompany an expedition of half a million men against them. It ended in disaster. His army was almost annihilated: the general in command was killed and Cheng T'ung himself taken prisoner. The Mongols held the sovereign for ransom, but although the sum demanded was ludicrously small, for some strange reason the ransom money was never paid, and the Emperor was left in the hands of his captors, his brother Ching T'ai (A.D. 1450) being placed on the throne. When the Mongols perceived that they derived no benefit from keeping him a prisoner, Cheng T'ung was finally sent back, but as his brother was unwilling to abdicate, he was forced to retire for a time into private life, living quietly in the Pu Tu Ssü. Afterwards, during an illness of Ching T'ai, he regained the throne by a *coup d'état* and ruled over the Empire for another eight years.

When Prince Jui was killed in December 1650 at the early age of 39, whilst engaged in his favourite sport of hunting, the boy emperor rewarded the masterful captain, who for seven years had been the guiding spirit in the counsels of the Manchus, with the highest posthumous titles. Later, through the accusations of his rivals, he lost these honours and his name was removed from the Imperial clan, but more than a hundred years afterwards the Emperor Ch'ien Lung restored his fame, thus proving that no man's deeds are ever finally condemned in Chinese history.

His picturesque palace long remained haunted in the popular imagination with memories of the great hero and the pathos of its empty walls was sung in a contemporary ballad :

"I wander through the wood of whispering pines,
And pass the gateway of a princely house.
There reigns a heavy silence in the courts
Where slumbering birds are startled at my voice.
Through carven windows peep the unchecked weeds,
And the tall spears of grasses pierce the tiles.
None seek for favours at the open door ;
The place is but an empty tenement
Without a host. . . .
The warrior who for seven glorious years
Planned glorious deeds within these crumbling walls,
Is gone to be a guest in heavenly halls."

(*Wu Wei-yeh* : "*Tu-shu-wo-shu-shih*.")

The Emperor K'ang Hsi converted the old palace into a Lama temple dedicated to the Mahakala Buddha, hence the name Mahakala Miao, and gave the priests the

special privilege of holding services in Mongolian instead of Thibetan.¹²⁶

A little Lama boy, seeing visitors approach, appears with the key of the hall which they desire to visit. He leads them across the single courtyard to the sanctuary. It contains many interesting and curious things. On the left is a fantastic carved stand with bronze bells, each of a different tone. The little Lama points out with a chuckle that some are missing. Perhaps the empty spaces represent good bargains. Further back stand rows of gods looming weirdly in the dusk. Arhats and Buddhas and Bodhisats and the shapes of a mythology older than they, fill the shadowy space. Their art is not of any one place or time. Some are conventional Kuan Yins seated upon lotus pedestals; others, the Queens of Heaven, ride on elephants, tigers or monsters mythical. One sinister and splendid figure, blood red, demoniac, fearfully muscled and with eyes of delirious fury, tramples upon a human being.

High up near the ceiling is a small niche with silken curtains—the shrine of the Mahakala Buddha. But the golden image is gone, stolen in Boxer times like most of the other treasures of the temple. Empty also is the

¹²⁶ This is the only Lama temple in Peking where Mongolian services are allowed despite the fact that most of the Lama communities are composed almost exclusively of Mongols. A similar exception was made for two lamaseries in the village of Hai Tien, on the Summer Palace road, and for the one near the Hsi Ling: in all three the sacred books are read in Manchu. The only lamasery in which services are held in *Chinese*, is said to be at Jehol.

niche in the gilded model of the holy temple of Wu T'ai Shan. Its golden god likewise excited the cupidity of some "Harmonious Fist" who mingled greed with his misguided patriotism. The holy books, stored in cupboards which our guide obligingly opens, were spared. Probably the looters did not know their value as one of the few complete texts written in Mongol, or else they were too bulky to carry away. Some tree trunks of precious woods carved with scenes from the life of Buddha still stand before the altars, and a handsome stone incense burner, much like an early Italian fount, remains, as well as various painted bronze vessels, scarcely recognizable as such until, on being tapped, they give out the soft note of a muffled bell.

The novice gropes his way into a side chapel where it is so dark that one is unable to distinguish anything but vague forms. With practical irreverence, he takes a candle and, lighting it, climbs upon the altar to illuminate the images. They are demon figures, half man, half bird or beast, beaked or clawed—fearful monsters typifying death, or impersonations of hurricane creative power anatomically too realistic to bear close inspection. Near these crimson and green gods with wicked eyes that burn in the dark like the eyes of a black cat, stand four swarthy guardians, dressed like men-at-arms, who seem to gaze naively at the foreigner, utterly unconscious that they appear to him unholy and uncomely. Quaint effigies of Buddha's "Army of animals," symbolising force not far distant from ferocity, surround them.

Among these strange creatures that might have stepped from Noah's Ark, is the armour of the great Dorgun. The dusty satin coat lined with iron plates, the pointed helmet, the yellow ceremonial umbrella falling to shreds, the arrow cases stiff with years, the bow he bent so bravely, call vividly to mind the figure of the warrior statesman whose skill, prudence and moderation were largely responsible for bringing China under Manchu rule, and whose mediæval presence kept aglow the princely magnificence of the sanctuary before the gods intruded there.

CHAPTER X.

TEMPLES OF THE TARTAR CITY.

THE Tartar City is even richer in temples than the Imperial City. Under its northern walls we find two small wind-blown shrines chill even in the sun, on the banks of the Chi Shui T'an, now a shallow pond but once a fine lake crowded with barges bringing country produce to the capital along the canal built by Kublai Khan.¹²⁷ The insignificant Ming buildings of one of these shrines, the Kao Miao ("High Temple") are forever associated with the names of Parkes and Loch. Here these unfortunate Englishmen, treacherously imprisoned in 1860, and cruelly ill-treated in the Board of Punishments, were lodged for many weary weeks. The old priest in charge until a few years ago remembered as a young

¹²⁷ This canal, still to be seen to-day near the Hsi Chih Mên but slow-flowing through neglect, was originally intended to bring the waters of the Western Hills to the capital, and linked up a whole system of waterways with the Grand Canal. The laying out of the lakes in the Tartar City was Completed under the Emperor Wan Li, in remembrance of the landscapes of the Yangtze valley—the cradle of the Ming dynasty.

There used to be much animation on the banks of the Chi Shui T'an, and many curious ceremonies took place there. On the 12th day of the sixth moon it was the custom to bathe the Imperial horses in its waters, and the animals were led in procession, covered with silken blankets, preceded by grooms waving red flags and followed by a black cow with a single horn "who must on no account be allowed in front of the horses."—A week before, the Imperial elephants were taken for their yearly bath, not here but in the city moat outside the Shun Chih Mên, while large crowds of people watched the spectacle. A certain day was also set aside for women to wash their hair, and householders to bathe their cats and dogs.

acolyte when the two "foreign devils" were kept in custody in the temple, and pointed out the cramped courtyard where they walked in constant fear of being killed if the Allied armies, camped outside the walls, should attack the city; also the small dark room where they slept, with the square of wall paper (since removed by loving hands) on which they had written their names and last messages. Such proofs fix the Kao Miao without a doubt as the place of imprisonment of Parkes and Loch, though the little Yuan dynasty temple, taking its name from the lake and looking very old and grey on an artificial hillock across the water, claims the captives too.

The whole north-western corner of the Tartar City between the Hsi Chih Mên and the Têh Sheng Mên is a delightful mediæval quarter little explored by foreigners, and practically untouched by "progressive" influences. Here life is lived as in Ch'ien Lung's day, with only a few telegraph poles to disturb the illusion. Peddlers still sell to women shyly peeping from their doorways. Men bargain for their coffins in the streets. Dyers stretch their silks in the sunny waste spaces to dry, and no ugly modern shadows fall on the happy, friendly life.

There are a number of little-known temples in this old-fashioned neighbourhood, well worth seeking out. By far the finest is the imposing Kuan Yo Miao, a handsome group of buildings originally intended for the memorial shrine of the ex-Prince Regent's family (Prince Chun, father of the deposed Emperor Hsüan T'ung), and situated immediately behind his vast palace. As this

magnificent temple was only built in the reign of Kuang Hsü, it is still in perfect preservation and enables us to judge how the older monuments looked when their paint was fresh and their tiles were still intact. Yuan Shih-k'ai, in the name of the Republic, appropriated this property and converted it into a military shrine dedicated to Kuan Ti and Yo Fei.

Kuan Ti¹²⁸ is sometimes erroneously described as the Chinese God of War, a person in reality non-existent in the Chinese Pantheon. "But he is probably the most famous of the great soldiers who were canonised by their country as unselfish patriots, and certainly the most romantic figure in one of the most romantic periods of Chinese history (the Period of the Three Kingdoms). He was first singled out for special honours by the Sung emperors who set him up as a central figure of a national cult," that was continued by the Mings with regular sacrifices, and developed by the Manchus with special reverence.

"As Kuan Ti received exceptional honours from the late Ch'ing dynasty, it would not have been surprising if the victorious revolutionaries had decided to treat him with cold disdain. But the establishment of the Republic has not had this result on a hero who has so long contrived, curiously enough, to keep up his reputation among all kinds and conditions of men, and to-day he sits enthroned as a Protector of the State, receiving homage on his

¹²⁸ See Chapter II, and *The Cult of Military Heroes in China*, by R. F. Johnston (*The New China Review*, 1921).

birthday according to the ancient decree (promulgated as far back as 1531) which says that "national events of importance shall in future be reported to the spirit of the Marquis Kuan in his temple, so that he may not be left in ignorance of his country's fortunes." Perhaps the new generation feels that his miracles may still be useful, and, remembering how on numerous occasions he has come to the rescue of outnumbered armies and beleaguered garrisons by appearing at the head of an irresistible force of demon or angel soldiers (the alleged Mons incident has many a prototype in Chinese annals), has decided to remain not only his grateful but his hopeful worshippers.

Kuan Ti's special position, however, is not quite what it was before 1911, for he is now required to share his quasi-divine honours with another patriot, Yo Fei, who also holds a place in the affection of the Chinese people. This high-souled warrior, who has been called the Chinese Bayard, lived nearly a thousand years after Kuan Ti during a very unhappy period of Chinese history. He distinguished himself against the Golden Tartars (Chins), at that time engaged in driving the Sung emperors from the plains of northern China. But the reigning Sung monarch (Kao Tsung) was by no means elated at his victories, fearing that this redoubtable general would force the Tartars to send back the Emperor Ch'in Tsung (*see* Chapter XI, "Fa Yuan Ssü") whom they had carried off as a prisoner, in which case Kao Tsung would either have had to resign his throne, or fight against its legitimate occupant. Yo Fei was also unlucky enough to incur the hostility

of Ch'in Kuei, a powerful minister whose intrigues against Yo Fei finally resulted in his imprisonment and death. (See Chapter XI, "Chin Chung Miao").

In course of time the gradual elevation of Yo Fei to a place among China's patron saints and divinities took place by that curious process of posthumous rehabilitation not uncommon in the East. "A temple was built and dedicated to him, and funds were provided for periodical sacrificial rites. But very little notice of Yo Fei was taken during the Manchu period, and this for an interesting reason. The Golden Tartars against whom he had fought so strenuously were kinsmen of the Manchus . . . and racial pride, if not filial piety, demanded that the Manchu sovereigns should show respect for the memory of their predecessors on the Dragon Throne. Still, nothing was actually done to injure the reputation of the great soldier who had been the deadliest enemy of the Tartar race, or deprive his spirit of the honours it already enjoyed."

The idea of a "military temple," where formal homage should be paid to Kuan Ti and Yo Fei, together with 24 other celebrated leaders and patriots who were considered worthy to partake in the ceremonial rites (Kuan Ti and Yo Fei were to share the highest honour equally, and the others were to be regarded as their spiritual "associates"), originated with Yuan Shih-k'ai and was based on sound considerations of practical statecraft and national efficiency. Its main objects were to encourage patriotic ideals among the people, to raise

the public estimation of the profession of arms and inspire the soldiers themselves with military zeal and professional ardour.

The principal hall, or chapel—"The Hall of Military Perfection"—in the Kuan Yo Miao, which may be described as the "mother church" of the reorganised cult of military heroes, is a handsome building covered with beautiful coloured tiles and standing in a spacious courtyard. The interior with its timber pillars and richly decorated roof, magnificent in the stately simplicity of its arrangements, contains the figures of Kuan Ti and Yo Fei seated side by side, both richly robed, both conveying an aspect of stern dignity combined with gracious benevolence. There is also a model of Kuan Ti's famous charger "Red Hare," and his no less famous sword "Blue Dragon" with which he once struck a rock till water gushed out to slake his thirst.

"The first ceremony—both simple and impressive—in honour of the two patriots took place in this hall in January 1915. A general deputed by Yuan Shih-k'ai led his officers and soldiers to the newly established temple, and each man bowed his head as he filed past the effigy or tablet of those who fought and, in many cases, died for their country. Similar ceremonies have been carried out ever since both in Peking and in the provinces."

Almost next door to this imposing temple of Heroes is the peaceful old Nien Hua Ssü with several restful shady courtyards and fine images newly sheeted with gold. In the rear hall, very dusty despite the big glass case

which covers it, is a bronze Buddha seated upon a pedestal formed by hundreds of tiny images of Buddha—an unusual piece of work.

Not far away are two other Ming temples—the Yu Shen Ssü, where an enterprising merchant is manufacturing fine modern copies of black and gold furniture which look very quaint standing under the grey eaves of the verandahs, and the Kuang Hua Ssü where the visitor stumbles unexpectedly upon a splendid specimen of old European furniture, a Portuguese carved wood table presented to the monastery, according to the monks, in Ch'ien Lung's reign.

Another Kuan Ti Miao, dating from 1734, may be seen close by, near the stone bridge between the Hou Mên and the Drum Tower. Here once again we have a proof how this patriot unselfishly shares his shrines with other gods. The God of Riches, always a popular deity, has an altar in the self-same building, and so has the Fire God who in fact now gives his name to the temple, popularly known as the Ho Shen Miao. His face is dark, blackened perhaps by his own smoke and scorched by his flames, and he looks on the whole rather a boorish god.

Probably the oldest temple of the Tartar City, where so many famous temples, like the Ma Shen Miao,¹²⁹ Temple of the Protector of Horses (whose site is now occupied by part of the Peking University), have dis-

¹²⁹ Built by the Ming Emperor Cheng Têh and later richly adorned by the early Manchu sovereigns. Near it stood the Imperial stables and the department of eunuchs in charge of them, also the elephant stables.

appeared—is the tiny shrine, supposed to date from the T'ang dynasty, dedicated to Erh Lang, nephew of the Heavenly King, whose famous sleeve-dog “that howls towards the sky,” faithfully served him in his pursuit of the guilty heavenly monkey. The latter was the guardian of the peach trees of eternal life, but he stole the fruit instead of watching it. When Erh Lang discovered this he immediately gave chase to the monkey who, having the power of undergoing 70 metamorphoses (each the basis of a popular legend) baffled him again and again. Once the mischievous monkey entered his pursuer in the shape of a small worm who wriggled about inside him till he saw an opportunity of escape. Again he changed himself into a temple, the gate being his mouth, the front hall his head, etc. Erh Lang detected him on this occasion by noticing that the honorific lantern-pole, which represented the monkey's tail, was behind—not in front of the temple, that is to say—was in the right place anatomically speaking, but in the wrong place architecturally speaking (for the temple). Luckily Erh Lang was able to undergo 72 transformations as compared to the 70 of the monkey, so he finally outwitted the astute animal and chained him up for his misdeeds.

Situated on the Hata Mên street opposite the Teng Shih K'ou, his shrine is generally known as the “Dog Temple,” and numerous ex-votos of Pekingese pugs, little curly, short nosed, fringy pawed things, are heaped up on the altar. When a dog is sick, the owner sometime offers one of these life-like portraits in felt or fur, but it is

considered almost as lucky to steal one while the priest, who has been blinded by an offering, beats the gong with his back turned to the thief. If, however, the offering is not large enough, he suddenly turns round and catches the would-be thief and the whole manœuvre becomes ineffectual.

The discovery that not only Erh Lang, "The True Prince of the Wonderful Tao," could cure the illness of mortals, but that his dumb companion had the power to do the same for his own species was made accidentally by an old woman. While praying for the recovery of her son, her ailing pet dog, which had followed her to the shrine, was likewise miraculously healed, and her gratitude took the form of the first ex-voto figure placed upon the altar.

When we visited this shrine, a woman was attending to the duties of the absent priest, burning the joss-sticks and beating the gong in the intervals between her sewing, also assisting pilgrims to "ch'ou-ch'ien", or engage in divination by the drawing of lots. This was done in the usual way with the bundle of divining sticks, each having a character corresponding to one sheet of a bundle of leaflets. The seeker for fortune shakes up the sticks in a bamboo jar, or "pi-t'ung", until the one showing his fate falls out, and the old lady hands him the leaflet prophesying what is in store. Grown men come quite seriously to consult the oracle and his humble priestess. In fact the poor revenues of the temple are drawn chiefly from this harmless spring of superstition.

A quaint legend is attached to the Erh Lang Miao. In olden times a butcher owned a thriving establishment in the neighbourhood. One morning he noticed that the best piece of meat left on his stall over night had disappeared, and this happened day after day. Puzzled and annoyed, he accepted his son's offer to watch in the shop after dark, armed with a knife, in the hope of discovering the thief. About midnight the lad was aroused by the appearance of a yellow dog attempting to steal the succulent morsel. He made a stab at the animal, which disappeared. But to his amazement, on following the blood trail, he saw that the creature had gone out through the crack of a bolted door. Next morning he traced the trail to the Erh Lang Miao. Now his family had always been devout worshippers at that temple, and he was therefore shocked to find that there was a deep gash in the effigy of the dog lying at Erh Lang's feet. From that day the butcher's business failed, and his family were reduced to beggary, proving that butchers like other men may sometimes entertain an angel unawares, and it occasionally pays to give up "the pound of flesh."

On the opposite side of the city, the south-western, are two large temples better known, if less alive in the hearts of the people. One, the Pai T'a Ssü, we have often seen from a distance, for its tall white dagoba towers high above the trees, and rivals the white cone of its sister on the island in the Pei Hai.

We explain to our rickshaw coolies where we wish to go, with the assistance of the policeman, the old

women and the friendly helpful crowd, ever ready in Peking to ask questions and give advice. Then begins the long winding through mysterious lanes which become wider as we proceed, till we reach the broad P'ing Tse Mên Ta Chieh where the dagoba stands, surrounded by a dilapidated temple with a battered entrance gate. Yet once upon a time this Monastery of the White Dagoba was rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Built by the Chins in 1084 to contain relics of Buddha, it was magnificently embellished by Kublai Khan in 1271 as a Lama temple dedicated to the Bodhisatva Manchushri, or "Buddha of Wisdom." Marble balustrades were added to the stairways. More than five hundred pounds of gold and over two hundred pounds of quicksilver went to gild the monument itself. The pinnacle, 270 feet above the ground, was ornamented with bronze reliefs beautifully worked, and the body of the dagoba adorned with jasper and encircled with a string of pearls. In 1423, eight hundred little brick pillars were distributed round it to hold votive lamps, and on some of the iron lanterns half effaced characters indicating Ch'ien Lung's reign are still decipherable.

With muffled step and hollow cough an old Lama guardian approaches, holding the usual rusty key. He has a poverty stricken appearance but a kindly face and his smile of welcome shows how much he needs the little gratuity which it is usual to give. As he opens each creaking door he coughs so badly that we feel if we ever come here another time we shall ask for him in vain.

Little enough is to be seen in the temple—only a few halls with gods whose aureoles are broken and whose altars are bare of offerings. A sad Buddha stands lonely in his folded robe, lifting his hands in a vanity of blessing. The worn hollow steps leading to his shrine tell of dead thousands whose pilgrim feet have trod them, and the old Lama, who has opened these doors for 40 years, remembers hearing from men who were old when he was a shaven headed acolyte of the ancient splendours of the temple—of its portrait galleries, of the famous library added in the seventeenth century, of the last repairs undertaken by the faithful in 1819 and, most wonderful of all, of the Sandal Wood Buddha whose abiding place it once was.

Now this statue of Buddha was for centuries the most famous image in Peking. It was the smallest of the three statues supposed to have been made in Heaven, and consecrated by Sakyamuni himself as a representation of his body. It bore the message: "One thousand years after my entry into the Nirvana you (the image) will travel to the land of Chen T'an (China) to bring great bliss to the people and lead them towards Heaven." The figure was transported to the Pai T'a Ssü after many wanderings, all of which are on record. K'ang Hsi interested himself in its history and left a description of it. The sound of the precious sandal wood of which it was made was metallic like the sound of bronze. It was bright as lacquer and miraculously changed colour according to the light and temperature. Seen from behind, it appeared to

have the head bent forward in meditation, but looked at from the front, the face seemed lifted upwards. One hand was stretched downwards, the other raised in blessing, and the fingers were connected with each other like the webbed toes of a goose.

Unfortunately for the glory of the Pai T'a Ssü, K'ang Hsi's veneration for this most holy image led him to build a special monastery for it, the Hung Jen Ssü, near the Pei Hai where it was removed when the Buddha, according to legend, attained the age of 2,700 years. Thus, shorn of its treasure, the Temple of the White Dagoba gradually declined in power and popularity till now it has become only a place of memories.¹³⁰

Quite close to the Pai T'a Ssü and immediately beside the new Central Hospital is another shrine well worth visiting—the Ti Wang Miao, a memorial temple dedicated to all the monarchs of China from the remotest ages to the Manchu dynasty, and to the great men of their reigns. This is, in fact, the Chinese Pantheon. The two stone tablets before the gate are “getting-off-horse” tablets such as we see before Imperial graves and buildings of particular sanctity. Their inscriptions, however, are unusual, being in four languages, Chinese, Manchu, Thibetan and the rare Arabic.

¹³⁰ The magnificence of the Hung Jen Ssü impressed all who visited the monastery. Its treasures were priceless—draperies, embroideries, golden altar vessels and jewels presented, for the use of the Buddha and the profit of the priests, by the faithful. In 1900 the place became a stronghold of the Boxers who looted it with zeal and thoroughness. The Buddha disappeared and the monastery itself was burned, the site being now occupied by military barracks.

The first courtyard is empty. In the second stand several buildings, a main hall much in the style of the Palace halls, two smaller side halls, and two "t'ing'rhs" containing stone tablets—all first erected in 1522 but enlarged under the Ch'ings who covered their roofs with yellow tiles. Pigeons roost unmolested in the eaves. At our approach, they take flight circling into the sky, now appearing snowy white, now soft grey as their bodies turn to the glittering sunlight or lie in shadow. And mingling with the melodious whirr of wings, we catch a plaintive note, like the sigh of an aeolian harp, produced by the rush of air through bamboo whistles attached to their tails.¹³¹

Save one crooked old gate-keeper, there are no attendants and no priests. The worship which took place annually in this temple was performed by a prince of the first rank delegated by the Emperor to sacrifice in his name to the illustrious dead.

Naturally the Western reader may ask: "Why this curious anomaly of an alien dynasty discharging duties of sacrifice to those it dispossessed?" The answer to such a question involves an explanation of Chinese belief in ancestor worship and the cult of the dead too long to give here.

Yet even without a deeper insight of underlying principles, how impressive are the rows of simple tablets

¹³¹ The Pekingese make these whistles with eleven different notes, so that several flocks of birds flying near one another produce almost the effect of a chime.

of men who once ruled the Middle Kingdom standing side by side and worshipped by their successors, that their spirits may bless the State.

"There are no images. The canonised heroes are represented by their spirit tablets only, that is to say by plain oblong pieces of wood each bearing the name of the person it represents. In the place of honour stand tablets somewhat larger than the others—the tablets of the Perfect Emperors."

In the propitiatory services, these simple strips of lacquered wood (differing from one another only in the gilded characters indicating the reign and posthumous title) were given honours equal to those accorded their owners in life, because the spirit of the departed was supposed to reside actually in the tablet. Due ceremony required that a newly arriving tablet should do homage to those of its ancestors, and the Master of the Rites, reverently kneeling to receive it, "invited" the tablet with all solemnity to be pleased to leave its chariot and enter the temple. The precedence in the spirit world was exceedingly rigid, more rigid than at any mortal Court.¹³²

¹³² A curious example of this careful adherence to rank occurred when the tablet of the Old Buddha was invited to enter the Manchu Temple of Ancestors (T'ai Miao). Before this could be done it was necessary that the tablets of her son T'ung Chih and of her daughter-in-law should first be removed from the hall, because the arriving tablet could not perform the usual obeisance to its ancestors in the presence of that of a younger generation. To give an idea of the respect with which the tablet of a reigning sovereign was treated, we may add that the Regent, acting for the child-Emperor Hsüan T'ung, made nine "k'o-tous" before each of the Nine Ancestors and their 35 Imperial Consorts, with due regard to the order of seniority. (See Backhouse and Bland, *op. cit.*).

Chinese annals, however, are full of instances showing that spirits may be degraded or promoted in the shadowy world. Ghosts might even be excluded from the Pantheon. K'ang Hsi, for example, refused admittance to the tablets of two Ming emperors as having been the authors of the ruin of the Empire, though he included the last one who fell with his throne. The selection of good sovereigns alone recalls to mind the custom in ancient Jerusalem of allowing wicked princes no place in the sepulchres of the Kings. But in China such exclusion was a very serious step, always attended with bitter discussions, because to condemn a spirit to wander comfortless in the other world might have dangerous consequences to the living.

On the other hand, those who were unjustly shut out might be reinstated, and this applied not only to sovereigns but to the spirits of distinguished statesmen (called by the Chinese "Kuo Chu" or "Pillars of the Land") who are associated with the glory of their masters in the side halls of the Ti Wang Miao. The rule even held good for women of the Imperial family. Remember the case of the Pearl Concubine, thrown down a well by Tz'ü Hsi's orders as the Court fled from the Forbidden City in 1900. When her conscience began to trouble the Empress Dowager, she issued a special decree praising the virtue and admirable courage of the dead woman, "who preferred to *kill herself* rather than witness the pollution and destruction of the ancestral shrines." Her trustworthy conduct was therefore rewarded by the granting of a posthumous title. This decree was regarded

as fulfilling all reasonable requirements of atonement to the deceased. "Alive, a Pearl Concubine more or less might count for little when weighed against the needs of the Old Buddha's policy: once dead, however, her spirit must needs be conciliated and compensated."

That posthumous honours still remain realities to the Chinese mind is proved by the new shrine erected in the courtyard behind the Wai Chiao Pu to the memory of four officials who bravely protested in the midst of the Boxer madness against the destruction of the Legations. Two of them at least—Yuan Ch'ang and Hsü Ching-ch'eng—voluntarily laid down their lives as a warning, to point out what they knew to be their country's highest good.¹³³

"If to meet an undeserved doom with high courage is heroism, then these men were indeed heroes. In reading their memorials, and especially the last of them, one is inevitably and forcibly reminded of the best examples in Greek and Roman history. In their high-minded philosophy, their instinctive morality and calm contemplation of death, there breathes the spirit of Socrates, Seneca and Pliny—the spirit which has given European civilization its classical models of noble fortitude and many of its finest inspirations, the spirit which, shorn of

¹³³ Their courage and unselfish patriotism was first recognised by their canonization, under an edict of the Regent, in the Ti Wang Miao.

its quality of individualism, has been the foundation of Japan's greatness."¹³⁴

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The twin pagodas of the Shuang T'a Ssü, which all who pass through the west city cannot fail to notice, are likewise memorial shrines built in honour of two Thibetan pontiffs. They are connected with a small Buddhist monastery erected by the Chins in A.D. 1200, neglected and forgotten by the Mings, but restored by Ch'ien Lung to disappear again in modern times. The two pagodas, one nine stories high, the other seven, bear the names of the holy men to whom they are dedicated.

¹³⁴ A stirring appreciation for the character of these patriots, as well as an excellent and scholarly translation of their memorials may be found in *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking and China Under the Empress Dowager*, by Backhouse and Bland.

CHAPTER XI.

TEMPLES OF THE CHINESE CITY.

THE temples of the Chinese City are the oldest in the capital. Most of them no foreigner ever visits, some he never even sees because they are hidden in little twisted lanes far from the main streets, lanes "alive or dead," as the Chinese call them, meaning lanes open at both ends and lanes with one end closed. Yet many of these sanctuaries are extremely ancient, with curious legends attached to them, and they appeal to the imagination, even in their crumbling ruin, quite as much as the better known shrines.

"Those people are little to be envied," as Ruskin says, "in whose hearts the great charities of the imagination lie dead, and for whom fancy has no power to repress painful impressions of ruin, to ignore what is ignoble, or disguise what is discordant in scenes otherwise so rich in remembrances."

Several temples in the Liu Li Ch'ang district, which had great historical interest and are marked as large and important on the older maps of the city, have completely disappeared; to look for them now is "love's labour lost." Little by little the fires of devotion burnt themselves out in one after the other, till store-houses replaced the altars where the battered images look like

what indeed they are—dusty gods retired from business—and lumber yards filled the courts that once resounded with the praises of Buddha. A quaint exception is the little Taoist temple, known as the Lū Tsu Miao, dedicated to Lū Tsu, one of the saints known as the "Eight Immortals" who is a patron chiefly of barbers and actors, but to this day commands also the superstitious devotion of some prominent Chinese dignitaries. Many votive tablets line the corridor leading to a small sanctuary where the air is never fresh, always stuffy, old-fashioned air.

There is more vitality about the P'an T'ao Kung, a small Taoist temple on the banks of the canal near the Tung P'ien Mên.

Translated its name means "Palace of Trained Peach Trees," and behind the image of the "Hsi Wang Mu Nai Nai," also known as the Princess of the Coloured Clouds (Pi Hsia Yuan Chün), may be seen an espalier of intertwined branches covered with paper peach blossoms. Among the Chinese the peach is the symbol of longevity, and to the Taoists it represents the fruit of the Tree of Life itself. He who by his virtuous conduct obtains the privilege of plucking a peach from the celestial orchard of the Heavenly Mother takes his seat among the Immortals who once a year celebrate a solemn feast in the palace of the Hsi Wang Mu. Wonderful dishes are served to them—bears' paws, monkeys' lips, dragons' livers, and the peaches plucked in the garden of the goddess which confer eternal life. In the P'an T'ao Kung all the Gods of Heaven are shown in an elaborate

carved frieze saluting the Hsi Wang Mu—"The Queen Mother of the Western Heaven"—who, attended by phoenixes and airy handmaidens, awaits the guests with the Mystic Peach in her hand. On the occasion of the Feast of the Immortals, on the third day of the third moon, a famous fair is held here amid much popular rejoicing. Large crowds congregate along the banks of the canal, where a regular street of shops and restaurants springs up, while horse racing and acrobats provide amusement. Occasionally the rare women-acrobats on horseback may be seen, and give a thrilling performance to which their red clothes and small bound feet lend an exotic charm. The fair is particularly popular with old ladies who assiduously say prayers and burn incense before the Hsi Wang Mu, begging her for long life and asking her to repair the ravages of the years.

Also in the neighbourhood of the P'an T'ao Kung, in the direction of the Tso An Mên, there stands the old pagoda of Fa T'a Ssü, familiarly known as the "Little Tired Pagoda," because of the legend attached to it. The story goes that many hundred years ago, in the time of the Chins, this pagoda was erected in a distant province. But one day it conceived a desire to visit the capital. So it started wandering across the fields and through the villages. And the country people, amazed at the miracle, knocked their heads in the dust as it went by, while the wise men who watched its progress murmured: "Verily the impossible hath been wrought by the strength of desire." At length, after journeying

tens and hundreds of miles, it passed the wall of the great city. Then, like a human traveller, it grew weary and rested on the spot where we see it now, having no strength to go farther. Therefore the people called it the "Little Tired Pagoda," and built a temple in its honour. But the temple has long since disappeared, and it stands now solitary in the fields—an extinguished torch.

Not far away, near the north wall of the Temple of Heaven, is a very peculiar memorial temple, the Chin Chung Miao, in honour of the same Yo Fei who is enshrined in the Kuan Yo Miao—and, strangely enough, erected by order of K'ang Hsi, whose dynasty had little reason to revere this Sung dynasty hero, and generally ignored him (*see* Chapter X). We only found this temple after many inquiries, and made our way there along the edge of an open sewer, thence up a little lane to a newly painted gate.

A polite man, evidently of the merchant class, to whom we announced the reason of our visit invited us to enter. "We have hired the place," he informed us, "for purposes of trade, but if you desire to see the ancient images of the temple—be pleased to come in." Whereupon he conducted us past a modernised show-room containing rows of cheap clocks, just alongside a crumbling old porch with two stone lions which had long ago lost their balance, fallen from their pedestals and broken their heads off. In the first courtyard he called our attention to a battered iron statue, a kneeling figure. "Formerly there were two," he explained. "One

represented the treacherous Minister Ch'in Kuei, the other—his wife, whose wicked intrigues brought about Yo Fei's death. Until recently they stood outside the temple, and passers-by spat upon the traitors and kicked their images. One statue, the woman's, finally fell to pieces and disappeared." "As for Ch'in Kuei," says Johnston (*The Cult of Military Heroes*), "it is not only his iron image that has been subjected to daily insult. His very name has undergone, and still undergoes, one of the worst indignities that could well be imagined, for it is used as a synonym for a spittoon, and his posthumous honorific title has been changed to 'false and foul' while, on the other hand, the warrior whom he defamed and slew has gathered fame and honour with the passing of the centuries."

The two halls dedicated to Yo Fei have not been dismantled, but his effigy, surrounded by his valiant captains and his bows and arrows, shares the first with mirrors and boxes of glass. In the second he sits enshrined with his wife, both figures larger than life and seated on chairs of honour among picture-frames.

The merchant's admiration for the hero seems nowise dimmed by his sordid surroundings. Rightly judging that the greatest figures of history have appeared at their best in exceptional moments only, he knew that Yo Fei in life must have more than once looked just as dusty as his image among the framed oleographs of "Queen Victoria's Coronation" and "Marie Antoinette on her way to the guillotine." "No theatrical idealism clouds for

any educated Chinese the sense of the humanity of his country's greatest men:—on the contrary, it is the evidence of everyday humanity around them that most endears their memories to the common heart and makes, by contrast, more picturesque and admirable lives that were not ordinary."

Once upon a time there were also temples behind the enclosure of the Temple of Agriculture, but many famous places, like Hei Lung T'an, have completely disappeared save for a few stone slabs to mark their sites. Those that are left scarcely concern themselves with spiritual matters; they chiefly serve as rendezvous for pleasure parties who in warm weather frequent their quiet rooms for dinners, or their terraces for the sake of the air and the view across the rushes that grow in profusion under the southern wall of the Chinese City. A unique monastery is the San Shen An, a vegetarian nunnery on the road to the Printing Works, near the Ch'eng Huang Miao (a temple dedicated to the tutelar deity of the city) where the well-known fair in honour of the Ch'ing Ming festival is held in the third moon. The cooks of this nunnery are renowned for their preparation of vegetable food, and wealthy Chinese patrons willingly forego meat which is forbidden on the premises, for the sake of the specialities of this refined kitchen.

There are a few more temples farther on near the Yu An Gate, in whose quiet courts life with its vulgar struggles, its hustle and obscenity scarcely penetrates, and behind whose walls existence flows slowly and deeply.

One of these is Sheng An Ssü, grey with age, drowsing in the open fields like an old, old man sitting in the sun and remembering many things. For years no repairs have been made here, and wounded roofs and walls are sadly in need of some surgeon's art. But two or three priests still drone a round of daily services in the single hall before the three large Buddhas, while

"Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream
Of the lands which the River of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed."

Neither the Buddhas nor the Arhats are remarkable. But the frescoes (probably Ming) of Buddhist figures, sometimes larger than life, that cover the walls are very striking—both well done and well preserved, and the copy of the Sandal Wood Buddha (Chan T'an Fo), that once stood in the Hung Jen Ssü near the Pei Hai (*see* Chapter X), is unique.

The priests claim the last Emperor of the T'ang dynasty, Chao Hsüan Ti (A.D. 904-907), as the founder of their temple, but admit that he left it unfinished at the fall of his house; none can say who repaired it when the "Winds of the Five Corruptions" began to blow upon it down the centuries and left it poor in revenues but rich in secluded, drowsy felicity.

Not far away is another T'ang temple, Tsung Hsiao Ssü, founded by the great T'ai Tsung himself after the

more famous Fa Yuan Ssŭ was finished. To honour these, his two favourite shrines, T'ai Tsung gave each a wooden image lacquered in gold from Thibet. The Wu Liang Fo stands in the main hall at Fa Yuan Ssŭ, but in Tsung Hsiao Ssŭ a replica is enshrined in a stone tablet in front of the sanctuary. Except for a few frescoes on the walls, there are no relics or treasures of interest and no signs of care or reverence for the altars of the gods. The priests are loquacious and greedy—spoiled by the visitors who come to see the famous root of the big tree, a catalpa, or "ch'u-ch'u," which has been preserved as a curiosity on account of its size, testifying to its great age. Long ago, to judge by the sotobas of the departed abbots outside the red walls, religion was taken seriously here. Now the priests neglect their masses for the more profitable occupation of gardening. Their peonies are famous and draw crowds of visitors in the season. Much work and care is expended on the plants, obviously to the detriment of religious observances, but the collection is indeed remarkable, showing magnificent specimens of wine red, pink, white and "black" blooms. The most curious and the rarest, however, are the green peonies which, when in full bloom, are only a shade lighter than their leaves.

Tsung Hsiao Ssŭ can nevertheless not compare, despite its garden, with Fa Yuan Ssŭ, the largest monastery in the Chinese City, situated south of the Liu Li Ch'ang quarter (Lan Mien hutung), on the spot where a bone of the goddess Kuan Yin was supposed to

have been found (A.D. 675). The dreamy repose, the mellow loveliness of the old buildings have a rare charm. There is no artificial colour, but brick and stone have turned, under the action of rain and sun, to different shades of greyness, varying according to surface exposures from the silvery tone of birch bark to the sombre grey of basalt. Besides, the sense of antiquity, of historical associations with T'ai Tsung, most revered of all the T'ang emperors, cannot fail to stir the visitor.

Among the priests we notice with pleasure that the ancient ideals are by no means dead. Unlike the inmates of most Buddhist establishments who do not even pretend to observe their vows, they love their sanctuary, they know its traditions, they are proud of its treasures. One old monk urges us to mount the rickety ladder steps of the bell tower and strikes the bell in order that we may thrill to the rich notes that have echoed down the centuries. Another shows us a huge acacia ("huai-shu") said to date from the T'ang dynasty, and many lovely flowering trees—lilacs with trunks a foot in diameter, blossoming plum and cherry trees, great filmy mists of petals. But he regrets, almost as if he himself were at fault, that the peony plants are still only green shoots sprouting from the earth, and begs us to return in the fourth month when their flowers are the glory of the temple gardens.

Then as the rumour spreads that honourable foreign guests are visiting the premises, a young priest, more highly educated than those we have met, comes to

acquaint us with the temple history and answer any questions we may wish to ask.

Courteously he decyphers the inscriptions on the stone tablets in the main courtyard. Several are Ming, one being the gift of the last ill-fated sovereign of the dynasty, but a few date only from the Manchus.

"These are mere modern things," he says apologetically. "Presently I will show you much that is more interesting."

All the doors of all the sanctuaries open at his command. We are taken through a small hall to see a statue of the kindly Buddha Who Loves Little Children, with figures of pretty naked babies playing about his shoulders and nestling in the folds of his neck—the same Pu Tai of the Lama Temple but more sympathetically presented.

Next we mount a high platform where another sanctuary stands. The priest points out the big blocks of its foundations. "They are part of the original temple built by T'ai Tsung," he relates. "The Beloved Emperor erected a pagoda on this site (which was in the south-east corner of the Peking of his day), on his return from his wars in Liaotung and Korea, as a memorial to the faithful officials and dutiful sons who had perished for the State. Here prayers were said for the repose of their souls and beneath these stones rest the ashes of some of his favourite horsemen, the dead yet undying heroes whom the Sovereign himself led to battle carrying black tiger skin banners—those same warriors who

shared his triumphal entries into his capital of Hsi An Fu."

"Many great men have been associated with this temple," he also tells us. "There was the Sung Emperor Ch'in Tsung who stopped here on his way from K'ai Fêng Fu to his death in captivity in the north as a prisoner of the triumphant Chins in 1126. There was the celebrated Hsieh Fang-têh, a loyal official and well-known scholar of the Sung period, who on being taken captive and imprisoned here by the Mongol Yuans refused to eat and so died. There was also the rebel An Lu-shan¹³⁵ (8th century A.D.) descendant of a Turkish tribe first conquered by T'ai Tsung, whose redoubtable revolt, when Governor of Peking, began the decline of the T'angs. He and a contemporary rebel general built two high brick pagodas here. But the greatest of all was T'ai Tsung himself, one of the noblest rulers who ever sat upon the

¹³⁵ An Lu-shan's fate was sealed at the battle of T'ai Yuan where artillery was first used against him by the troops of Su Tsung, successor of the unlucky Yuan Tsung (712-756) memorable as the founder of the Han Lin College and of the *Peking Gazette*, the oldest periodical in the world.—It is interesting to note that the Emperor Su Tsung employed in this campaign four thousand Arab soldiers, lent to him by the Khalif Abu Giafar. The descendants of these Arabs are part of the Moslem population of Kansu province who preserve a dim legend to that effect. A peculiarly fine breed of ponies and the Lan-chou cats (popular with the Chinese), whose general appearance reminds of the Angoras, both show traces of an admixture of the blood of races of animals brought by these strangers to a strange land.

Dragon Throne. His associations are indeed the glory of Fa Yuan Ssü.¹³⁶

Presently the young priest announces that the abbot would be pleased if we would take a cup of tea in his sitting room—an offer we gladly accept. An old man salutes us with that politeness which immediately puts a stranger at his ease, and phrases of courtesy to which we reply as best we know how, expressing gratitude for the unusually kind reception.

“It is rare,” he replies, “that Europeans ever visit this old temple. Would you care to see things that your countrymen seldom see?”

¹³⁶ The praise of the priest is justified by historical records. The Great T'ai Tsung (A.D. 627-649), contemporary of Mahomet, shed immortal lustre on the T'ang dynasty founded by his father, and the author of the *Middle Kingdom* compares him favourably with Akbar, Marcus Aurelius and K'ang Hsi, or with Charlemagne and Haroun Al Rashid. To him was due the pacification of the Empire after many centuries of disruption. Founder of an army of 900,000 men recruited from a people who had forgotten the art of self-defence, master of the regions from Kashgaria to Korea including Thibet (with which he was the first to deal, as he was the first to receive an embassy from Byzance, giving shelter at the same time to the last of the Sassanides), patron of arts and letters and himself an author of remarkable works, a mighty hunter and a famous warrior, he realised the ideal characteristics of a Chinese ruler. The splendour of his court and of his pageants reminds one of the dazzling description of Chinese magnificence which we find in the *Arabian Nights*. Boulger in *A Short History of China* says: “His whole figure stands out boldly as one of the ablest and most human of China's sovereigns,” while Parker quotes T'ai Tsung as “the only instance in the whole course of Chinese history of an emperor who was, from a European point of view, at once a gentleman and a brave, shrewd, compassionate man free from priggishness and cant.” After his death a reflection of his genius appeared in his concubine Wu Tse-t'ien, the famous Chinese Irène, sometimes called the “greatest of China's Catherines,” who later married T'ai Tsung's son, and ruled the empire for 22 years during which, despite her personal immoralities, the people prospered and much glory was added to the fame of the T'angs.

Again we express our thanks and he gives orders that we shall be conducted to the holy of holies, himself accompanying us and calling our attention to those things worthy of notice, for example the queer lantern-shaped stone box with inscriptions, in front of the sanctuary and the stone tablet within, dating from the tenth century—both valuable historical relics, the images behind the gilded screen of woodwork and gauze, one of which is that supposed to have been presented by T'ai Tsung himself, and the "Chieh T'ai" or platform for ordaining priests, of which only three exist in the temples of Peking and the neighbourhood.

We follow him into a pretty courtyard back of the main building where stands a two storied temple. Here we admire some pictures painted in the reign of Yung Cheng and copied on older models. The deep blues and rich reds are as fresh as if they had left the brush but yesterday. Figures and faces follow the law of Chinese art in the subordination of individualism to type, of personality to humanity, and we turn from the dignified, passionless countenances of painted saints, and the soft folds of their draperies, to find replicas in the faces of the monks standing about us watching with the same quiet, half curious inscrutable gaze, in robes less brilliant in colour but differing little in form.

Pleased with our admiration, the old man gives an order and a priest brings from a recess scrolls which he tenderly unrolls. "These," says the abbot gazing at them lovingly, "are genuine Sung pictures. We were

lucky to preserve them during the Boxer troubles. But they are not often opened. Once when they were shown to a foreigner, he wished to buy them for a museum and became insulting when we refused to sell at his price or any price. Therefore now they are seldom brought out."

After we have duly inspected and wondered at these marvels, he adds: "There is just one more thing you may care to see," and leads us to a side altar with some tablets upon it, such as are used for the spirits of the dead, and lamps burning before them and dainty offerings of cakes and fruit.

"These tablets," he explains, "are to commemorate the soldiers who died in the Great War and the offerings are for the comfort of their souls."

"But no Chinese soldiers were killed on those dreadful European battlefields?" we suggest.

"Certainly, we know that. They are for the foreign soldiers."

"Of course you realise that none of those dead are Buddhists?"

"Yes, but may we not admire the beauty of their sacrifice? And are not all faiths fundamentally alike in that they desire the good of all mortals. In your Christian churches do you not pray for the salvation of all and believe in it?"

At a loss to admit that immense kindly toleration such as this is not universal, we remain silent. Therefore, sensing that he has asked what we do not wish to answer,

he covers our confusion by remarking : "If you will permit it, this temple desires to set up a tablet especially to commemorate the dead heroes of *your country*. And we wish to invite you shortly to join us in a universal service of remembrance for all—for we feel sure you must revere the beauty of Buddha's teaching."

"We honour the faith of such as you who follow it," we answer. Then at the threshold we say our goodbyes, and the abbot and his monks bow very, very low showing the crowns of their smoothly shaven heads, glossy like balls of ivory.

CHAPTER XII.

TEMPLES AND TOMBS OUTSIDE THE CITY.

SCATTERED over the plain outside the city we also find many temples. Some are tumble-down monasteries whose revenues have failed, whose worshippers have fallen away, and in whose solitudes a few infirm priests manage to exist. Such are interesting only to specialists in Chinese antiquities or students of inscriptions: their crumbling gods are of a world incomprehensible without years of familiarity—a world of myths, beliefs, and superstitions about which Westerners as a rule know nothing. Others remain as famous as any sanctuaries within the walls and to this category belong Ta Chung Ssü, Wan Shou Ssü, Po Yün Kuan and the Tung Yüeh Miao.

Perhaps the best known to foreigners is Ta Chung Ssü also called Chüeh Sheng Ssü, or "Temple Where they Understand the Secret of Existence," renowned for its mighty bell—to which clings a story of filial piety beautifully re-told by Lafcadio Hearn in *Some Chinese Ghosts*. This temple lying among quiet fields is an easy and pleasant walk of two miles from the Hsi Chih Mên, or an excellent ride of four or five from the An Ting Mên across the plain, passing through the old Tartar mud wall, once the northern boundary of Kublai Khan's capital.

A shrine of some sort existed on this site long before the famous bell was moved here from Wan Shou Ssü in 1743, or the red-eaved hexagonal building constructed to house this world's wonder, the greatest feat of artistic bronze casting in China. It swings down to our level from enormous rafters, and the lips, curved like flower petals, are graven with sayings from the Sacred Books. Stand in the pit beneath and marvel at its height.¹³⁷ Then climb the warped stairway and toss cash through the hole in the top—purposely left to prevent the bell from bursting when struck too hard or when the strokes follow one another too closely—for the coins that fall through the opening bring luck to the thrower.¹³⁸

We wish to hear the mighty voice but the priests say this is forbidden and has ever been so without an express order from the Emperor. They remind us that it is no common temple bell and relate its history.

Yung Loh himself commanded it to be made in the 15th century, some say as a present to a famous priest, and an inscription records the sovereign's name and the name of the man who cast it. According to the Imperial desire, it was to be of such a size that when struck the sound should be heard for a hundred *li*

¹³⁷ By actual measurements, which, however, give no idea of its impressiveness, the bell is 17 feet high, 34 feet at its greatest circumference and eight inches thick. Its weight is variously estimated at from 20,000 to 80,000 pounds. Though the big bell of Moscow is larger, this is the largest *hanging* bell in the world.

¹³⁸ Like most Chinese bells it has no tongue and is not rung but struck from the outside by a log of wood swung on chains.

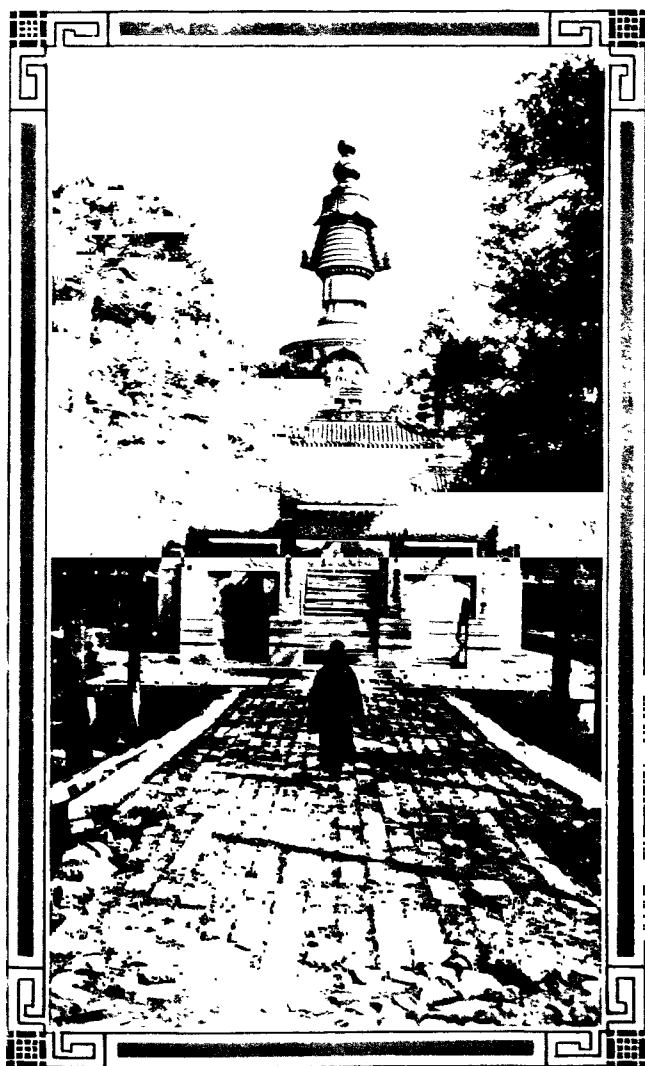
(30 miles), therefore the bell was strengthened with brass and deepened with gold, and sweetened with silver. But though the master-moulder measured the materials for the alloy and treated them skilfully and prepared the fires and the monstrous melting pot for melting the metal, and though the casting was made twice, each time the result was worthless. Whereupon the Emperor grew so angry that he sent word if the renowned bell-smith failed again, his head would be severed from his neck. "Then the bell-smith consulted a soothsayer who, after a long silence, made answer: 'Gold and brass will never meet in wedlock, silver and iron never will embrace until the blood of a virgin be mixed with the metals in their fusion.'

When the beautiful daughter of the bell-smith heard this, she determined to save her father from the fate hanging over him. So, on the day of the third casting, she leaped into the white flood of metal crying: 'For thy sake, Oh! my father.' The whirling fountain of many coloured fires absorbed her and no trace of her remained except one tiny shoe with embroidery of pearls and flowers, left in the hand of the serving woman who had sought to grasp her by the foot as she jumped, but had only been able to clutch the pretty shoe. When the casting was finished, however, the bell was more perfect in form and more wonderful than any other bell. And when it was sounded, its tones were deeper and finer and richer than the sound of any other bell so that its voice, like summer thunder, was heard at a distance of twice

100 *li*. Yet, between each stroke, there was always a low moaning which ended in a sound of sobbing and complaining, as though a weeping woman softly murmured: 'Hiai!' And when that sharp, sweet shuddering came in the air, then all the Chinese mothers in the many-coloured byways of Peking whispered to their little ones: 'Listen, that is the dutiful daughter calling for her shoe. Hiai! That is she crying for her shoe.' ¹³⁹

On the An Ting plain itself stands another well-known temple, the Huang Ssü or Yellow Temple. This large rambling place consists of two establishments, the eastern and the western, each of which is presided over by a different group of Lamas. The buildings of the former, dedicated to Sakyamuni Buddha, were erected on the site of an old Liao dynasty temple by the Emperor Shun Chih in 1652 as an occasional residence for the Dalai Lama. Those of the latter were constructed by K'ang Hsi about 1720 to accommodate Thibetan and Mongol Lamas in general, and have been the haven of such visitors ever since. Though all the earlier Manchu emperors took pains to conciliate the dignitaries of the Lama sects because they needed their allegiance and feared their enmity, K'ang Hsi had particular reason for doing so, as during his travels, so the legend runs, he caused the death of a Living Buddha at Kuei Hua Ch'eng in Mongolia. Hence the large sums this monarch spent embel-

¹³⁹ The Ta Chung Ssü bell was the largest of five great bells cast by Yung Loh's order. Another hangs in the Bell Tower and a similar legend is attached to it.



MARBLE "SUTA"—YELLOW TEMPLE (HUANG SSŪ).

lishing the Huang Ssü while striving to atone and gain the friendship of the Mongol monks.¹⁴⁰

The splendid marble "stupa" was added by Ch'ien Lung, the Magnificent, in memory of the Thibetan Pan-ch'eng Lama who died of smallpox at Peking in 1780. The holy man is not, however, buried under the monument. Careful always to keep an eye on the gallery of public opinion, the artist-emperor doubly proved his piety to the world by sending the body of the illustrious priest back to Thibet in a golden coffin and then erecting this beautiful "chorten" over a second precious casket containing his infected garments.

No better example of modern stone sculpture exists near Peking than this pinnacled memorial modelled on Thibetan lines, adhering generally to the ancient Indian type but differing in that the dome is inverted. The spire, composed of 13 step-like segments symbolical of the 13 Buddhist heavens, is surmounted by a large cupola of gilded bronze, and the whole monument with the four attendant pagodas and the fretted white *p'ai lous* is raised on a stone and marble terrace. From its wave-patterned base to the gilded ball 30 feet above,

¹⁴⁰ When K'ang Hsi appeared before the Living Buddha at Kuei Hua Ch'eng, the latter received him sitting upon his throne. One of the Emperor's followers, incensed at such casual treatment of his master, the Son of Heaven, thereupon drew his sword and killed the Saint. A terrible fight ensued with a heavy toll of life on both sides, so it is said, and K'ang Hsi himself just managed to escape by mounting a fleet horse.

it is chiselled with carvings in relief which recall the Mongul tombs and palaces in Agra and Delhi, and on its eight sides we find sculptured scenes from the life of the deceased Lama—the preternatural circumstances attendant on his birth, his entrance to the priesthood, combats with heretics, instruction of disciples and death. A pathetic note is given by the lion who wipes his eyes with his paw in grief over the good man's passing. All this carving is unusually fine with extraordinary richness of ornamentation. Unfortunately many of the figures on the reliefs were mutilated by the soldiery quartered in the temple after 1900, who knocked the heads off with the butts of their rifles. Enough escaped destruction, however, to show the delicate detail of the work.

Compared to this monument, the other sights of the Yellow Temple shrink into insignificance. The curious but repulsive "Ts'an T'an" (outside the main enclosure), where dead priests are kept in square wooden boxes, only attracts the morbid visitor. For such, an obliging guide will lift the lids to show the Lamas in various stages of decay. The traveller's palace¹⁴¹ with its fine lofty rooms

¹⁴¹ Two Dalai Lamas were received and lodged in this palace; the first in 1652 with great pomp and state, the second, who arrived in the capital after his flight from Lhasa in 1908, with less formality, as his visit was considered ill-omened by the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi to whom astrologers had foretold that her own death would coincide with his visit—which it did. The richly decorated rooms were also the headquarters of Sir Hope Grant in 1860.

and handsome private chapel is closed to the general public, being reserved for the Living Buddha, the Minchur Gheghen. Most of the other buildings are falling into ruin. Even the main hall with the statue of Sakyamuni Buddha, where hundreds of Mongol pilgrims still piously prostrate themselves and deposit their *khadaks* (scarfs of blessing) on the idols, is full of cracks and rifts. The neighbouring temple, with faded but magnificent columns of yellow, blue and green, is already leaning and seems about to collapse, while in place of the *p'ai lou* which formerly faced the "stupa," lies a heap of plaster and stone.

Like the Yung Ho Kung, the Huang Ssü suffers sadly through lack of Imperial subsidies. The monks eke out a bare living with the manufacture of bronze images and rice bowls, incense burners and vases. At one time their foundry vied with Dolon-Nor in the manufacture of gods for the People of the Wilderness (Mongolia and Thibet). But the demand for images is no longer what it was, and most of the pieces which we see being turned out are not destined for temples at all, but for the cloisonné workers of the city, who do the wiring and enamelling and pay the Lamas a miserable pittance for the bronze vessels.

Notwithstanding their poverty, the monks of the Yellow Temple still keep up the yearly festival of Devil chasing on the 13th of the First Moon, when they execute a posture dance disguised as members of Buddha's Army of Animals—much like that held at the Yung Ho Kung

inside the city. A similar function also takes place at the neighbouring Hei Ssŭ ("Black Temple"), so called from the colour of its roof tiles. Here exhibition riding and races attract large crowds and all the owners of fast horses in Peking.¹⁴²

Another monument, showing like the Huang Ssŭ strong traces of Indian influence, is the ruined Wu T'a Ssŭ, or "Five Pagoda Temple," two miles west of Peking and quite near the Summer Palace road. Supposed to be a copy of the ancient Indian Buddhist temple of Buddhagaya, it has a picturesque history.

In the early part of Yung Loh's reign, during which a new impetus was given to the intercourse between China and India, a Hindu "sramana" of high degree came to the Chinese capital and was received in audience by the Emperor to whom he presented golden images of the five Buddhas and a model in stone of the diamond throne, the "vajrasana" of the Hindus, such being the name of the memorial temple erected on the spot where Sakyamuni attained his Buddhahood. In return the Emperor, himself the son of a Buddhist monk, appointed him State hierarch, and fitted up for his residence the "True Bodhi" temple to the west of Peking (founded during the preceding Mongol dynasty) promising at the same time to erect there a reproduction in stone of the

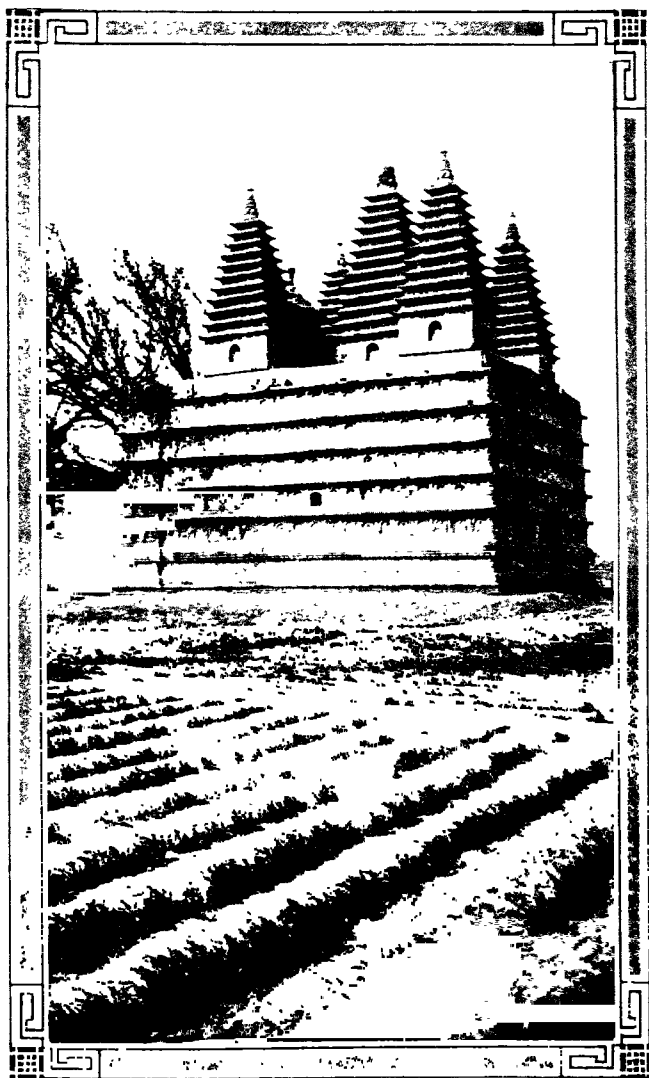
¹⁴² Unlike our clergy, Lama churchmen have always encouraged racing as the Mongols understand that sport, and throughout Mongolia the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries officially patronise it, themselves owning many of the favourites.

model temple he had brought with him, as a shrine for the sacred images. The new temple was not, however, finished and dedicated until the reign of Ch'eng Hua, according to the marble slab set up near it, and inscribed by the Emperor for the occasion. This specifically states that in dimensions as well as in every detail the Wu T'a Ssü is an exact reproduction of the celebrated Diamond Throne of Central India. Only the five pagodas from which the temple takes its name remain, standing on a massive square foundation whose sides are decorated with rows of Buddhas. Worshippers and objects of worship all have vanished. The priests are gone and the site is utterly abandoned save for the occasional visit of a hurried tourist.

Near the Wu T'a Ssü—in fact plainly visible from it—is the lofty two storied hall of the Ta Hui Ssü (Ta Fo Ssü), or "Temple of the Big Buddha." Though partially restored as late as 1910, it is rapidly falling into decay again under the melancholy eyes of a single priest, who bewails a poverty that leaves him impotent to save his crumbling buildings. He affirms that this temple was founded by the great T'ai Tsung of the T'ang dynasty, and was subsequently enlarged and restored by the Mings, in proof of which latter statement an incense burner dated Ching T'ai and a Wan Li tablet may be seen in front of the main hall. This contains a tremendous image of a "Thousand Armed and Thousand Eyed" Buddha, surrounded by Bodhisatvas and acolytes of heroic size—all impressive figures carved of wood and painted, showing

good workmanship but threatened with destruction by the bulging roofs.

A little further on in the same general direction we reach Wan Shou Ssü ("Temple of Ten Thousand Longevities") situated on the banks of Kublai Khan's canal bordered with graceful weeping willows. First built by the Ming Emperor Wan Li in 1577, the shrine has been repeatedly repaired and, until lately, kept in good condition, because the Imperial cortèges going by barge to and from the Summer Palace stopped there to rest. The Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi liked the place especially—liked its charming suite of detached guest rooms, liked to wander through the old rock gardens, to sip her scented tea under the yellow tiled *t'ing'rhs* and to view, from the balcony of the high "Hall of Ten Thousand Buddhas"—a Ch'ien Lung building where prayers were said for the longevity of his mother—the blue demi-lune of the Western Hills. Hence the Old Buddha never failed in generous gifts to the monks—which enabled them to keep their temple in good order for the glory of Sakyamuni and for her pleasure. Her Majesty's boat-house still stands just alongside the Kao Liang Ch'iao (the first bridge on the Summer Palace road outside the Hsi Chih Mên). An old legend is connected with this bridge. Owing to the iniquities which characterised the beginning of Yung Loh's reign, great ruler though he was, a saintly man imbued with magic powers decided to punish the Emperor, and if possible make him repent of his sins, by cutting off the water supply of Peking. This he



Wu T'a Ssü.

proceeded to do by filling two barrels, one with sweet, the other with bitter water, from two different wells in the capital, and wheeling them outside the walls on a barrow. A wise counsellor warned Yung Loh of the danger which was menacing his city, and the Emperor, much alarmed, called for volunteers to frustrate the wizard's scheme. None came forward, however, except one warrior named Kao Liang, renowned for his courage and recklessness. Kao Liang received orders to pursue the wizard, pierce the barrel containing the sweet water with a spear, and then gallop back at full speed, but on no account to turn round lest, like Lot's wife, great evil befall him. He obeyed, but no sooner had he pierced the barrel and begun to dash off on his horse amid a shower of sparks on the stones, than he heard the sound of a mighty rush of waters behind him. The faster he sped, the louder grew the roaring. Kao Liang had almost reached the city wall when the terrific noise behind him and the sight of a spreading sheet of water rising above his horse's hoofs overcame his precaution. Doubt vanquished faith. Recklessly he turned round and as soon as he did so—the waves swept over him and he was drowned on the very spot where the Kao Liang bridge now stands. Later Yung Loh discovered to his disgust that the champion, unable in his haste to distinguish between the wizard's two barrels, had pierced the one containing the bitter water. Water thus did come back to Peking, but has ever since been bitter and hard, so that many a traveller, unaccustomed to it, has

showered curses while shaving on poor Kao Liang and his well-meaning bungling.

More to the north of the city, near the An Ting Mên, lies the Temple of Earth (Ti T'an) dating from A.D. 1530, the complement, according to Chinese ideas, of the Temple of Heaven in the southern town. Like the T'ien T'an, it formerly had great significance as a sanctuary of annual Imperial worship, jealously guarded from the public until the Allied troops camped in the park in 1860. In spite of frequent repairs in the Manchu Emperor Chia Ch'ing's reign and even later, the buildings of the Temple of Earth are now falling into decay. Their general plan, however, is still traceable—much the same in essentials, though inferior in grandeur, to that of the Temple of Heaven. Smaller replicas of the Hall of Abstinence, of the *p'ai lous* and of the storehouses (where the various utensils used in the annual sacrifice are still preserved) stand among the stately trees. Only the open altar itself is square instead of round like that of Heaven, because according to the old belief the earth was square. Furthermore not glistening marbles but yellow tiles compose it, since yellow is the colour of the soil, and the furnaces and braziers of the T'ien T'an are absent because the sacrifices made here were buried, not burned.

An Altar to the Evening Moon (Hsi Yüeh T'an) exists beyond the west wall outside the P'ing Tse Mên, and another to the Rising Sun (Chao Ji T'an) outside the

east wall near the Ch'i Hua Mên—lesser shrines both built in the same year under the Ming Emperor Chia Ching—where princes of the blood were deputed to officiate.

The quadrangular Altar of the Moon was the scene of a pretty ceremony on the day of the autumn equinox, our Harvest Moon Festival. All the offerings were white—white silks, white jades, milky pearls. At moon-rise, a creamy white tablet with silvered characters meaning "Place of the Spirit of the Light of Night" was "invited" to ascend the altar where quaint rites took place accompanied by the soft clang of the sweet-toned bell in a near by tower.

Both these temples contain nothing worth seeing. Why trouble then to visit them? Partly for the sake of the grounds, restful in their spaciousness and calm, where cattle are feeding among the bricks of fallen buildings where, since the mower's scythe swept here at dawn, swathes of soft grass send up their scent into the air—the only incense that fills this temple of ancient worship. Partly also—because something of what the worship of nature signifies in the development of the Chinese race-soul may be learned in these ragged wildernesses.

Later there grew up through other cults, like Taoism, a worship of spirits which in time dimmed the older, grander beliefs with a host of angels, demons and deities made in man's image.

Taoism is a striking example of doctrines conceived in mystic purity but deteriorated into a mass of superstitions by the multitude. If Lao Tzŭ, its founder, were still alive, it would be impossible for him to trace the smallest resemblance between his own ideals and the polytheistic worship of the present day which bears his name. Certainly he would not recognise half the gods whose effigies stand in his temples.

About the best example of a Taoist pantheon, with innumerable and often absurd images, is the Tung Yüeh Miao, a rich sanctuary which dates from the Mongol dynasty (A.D. 1317) and was built up on the site of older structures. It lies half a mile beyond the Ch'i Hua Mên (east gate of the Tartar city) just opposite the Temple of the Rising Sun with the striking green and yellow *p'ai lou*, and is dedicated to "Him Who Rivals Heaven," namely the Spirit of Mount T'ai Shan (the sacred mountain in Shantung) a deity who ranks in the Taoist hierarchy almost on a level with the Creator. In the main hall, this deity sits enshrined where shadows meet and whisper and shrink back into deep warm darkness. A corner of his sanctuary is shared by the God of Writing to whom all those desirous of succeeding in literature bring offerings of pen-brushes and ink slabs. Also on the occasion of the temple festival (from the 15th to the 28th of the third month) the pious, after confessing their sins and reciting their virtues, make gifts of paper, so that the Recording Spirits can write down their records and store them up against the future judg-

ment.¹⁴³ Three religious associations contribute to this festival—the Dusters, who dust the images, Artificial Flower Makers, who put up an arch of artificial flowers, and the Lamp Makers' Guild, which donates an oil lamp whose fire must not be extinguished.

The minor shrines of the Tung Yüeh Miao are filled with many gods, mostly those who control the mortal body. Persons suffering from various ailments come here to propitiate the Gods of Fever, of Chills, of Coughs, of Consumption, of Colic, of Haemorrhage, of Toothache, for gods exist governing "every part of the body from the hair to the toe nails." To make assurance doubly sure, the sick include in their pilgrimage a visit to the famous brass horse in one of the shrines behind the main hall, which can cure all the maladies of men. Here the old scriptural admonition: "An eye for an eye . . . " is literally paraphrased, for the blind have so long rubbed his eyes, with prayers for their own, that he also is nearly blind—and the lame have worn his shoulders down.

Mental ills and anxieties likewise find their physicians among the shrines. From the dusk of his ghost house Yüeh Hsia Lao Erh, the "Old Man of the Moon," who

¹⁴³ Since the God of Writing in the mythical period of antiquity elaborated, according to legend, the art of forming ideographs by imitating the footprints of birds, the written character in China has become so sacred that the sin first mentioned is its misuse, whilst its preservation is counted among the meritorious actions. Men are still employed to collect old placards off the walls and every scrap of waste paper bearing characters. Such fragments are then taken to a special furnace of which there is one attached to many temples, and reverently burned.

ties the feet of predestined couples together with invisible red thread at their birth, listens to the prayers of lonely maidens seeking their mates. The Prison God heard the supplication of officials of the Board of Punishment, and Kuan Ti took pity on the executioner returning home from his hateful task and forbade the spirit of the criminal to haunt the instrument of justice. Poor women kneel with pathetic faith before the "Princess of the Coloured Clouds"¹⁴⁴—Pi Hsia Yuan Chün—daughter of the "Old Man of the Mountains" (who dispenses rewards and punishments), to ask her for some favour—a child to the childless or luck to the unsuccessful. And surely the goddess never could refuse, remembering the re-birth when she was woman and wife, the prayer we overheard prayed before her by a peasant girl:—

"I am dark, too dark because I have toiled in the field, because the sun has shone upon me. For the pleasure of my beloved, deign thou augustly to make me very white—white like the women of the city, Oh! Merciful Mother."

On the wall of the entrance a giant abacus helps debtors and creditors to settle their accounts. With prayer and fasting the disputants proceed to the temple and there spend a night. Then in the morning, none can tell how, the rightful decision appears upon the abacus. The gods have judged and their verdict is above the law.

¹⁴⁴ See Chapter XI, the "P'an T'ao Kung."

But the most unusual feature of the Tung Yüeh Miao is the open gallery of painted clay figures, portraying the punishments to which the evil are subjected in the numerous Taoist underworlds.

A special temple called the Shih Pa Yü ("Eighteen Hells"), situated a little further along the road to T'ung Chou¹⁴⁵, is entirely devoted to what "is popularly known among foreigners as the Chamber of Horrors." These torture scenes are rightly named, "for Madame Tussaud has nothing more ghastly to show in the whole of her wonderful collection." They represent the "Courts of Purgatory through some or all of which erring souls must pass before they are suffered to be born again into the world under another form, or transferred to the eternal bliss reserved for the righteous alone." (For a full description of these Courts see Herbert A. Giles, *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*, Appendix). The fearsome King of Hell with his open register of Life and Death presides grimly over the horrible tortures of the damned. A devil is busy sawing a soul in two and we notice that he uses h's saw just like a Chinese carpenter, pulling it towards him instead of pushing it. A liar, bound to a post, is having his tongue dragged out, slowly, with artistic jerks: already it is longer than the owner's body. The face is a nightmare. Several criminals appear with their heads

¹⁴⁵ Before reaching this Han dynasty city, there is a marble bridge, over the canal, known as the Pa Li Ch'iao. Here the French general Cousin-Montauban defeated the Chinese troops in 1860, and thus earned the title of "*Comte de Palikao*."

in their hands. A little farther on a man is being eaten alive by two monsters having women's faces: one is red, the other blue. "The red has been his wife, the blue his concubine," our guide explains.

We shudder: "Why do your Chinese artists like to portray such horrible things?"

"Oh, we find these painted plaster statues very good. Probably this man was unable to keep order in his household. Perhaps he was blinded by the infatuation of passion. How, then, could he hope to escape punishment?"

"Now if the foreigners prefer to see comfortable things"—he adds anxious to please.

"Assuredly! Show us comfortable things." Whereupon he obligingly leads us to see good men rewarded—wise, just, and honourable persons bringing offerings of silks and jade, and borne on clouds to the regions of Paradise. Thus we are able to carry away a pleasanter impression.

The mother temple and headquarters of the Taoist sect in the capital is the Po Yün Kuan or "Temple of the White Cloud" outside the north-west gate of the Chinese City, the Hsi Pien Mên, or "Western Wicket." A venerated place already in the days of Kublai Khan, it still remains one of the largest and richest monasteries in the neighbourhood with a community of over 100 monks. Through the palace eunuchs, who richly endowed it in the days of their prosperity to secure themselves a comfortable retreat for their old age, the temple was intimately connected

with the Court. The higher priests were rated among the palace functionaries and exercised no little influence on politics, while at the same time they managed to command popular respect (a rare thing in China where the priesthood is generally held in disrepute) by putting some dignity and form into an indefinite and baffling cult, elsewhere degenerated into wizardry and superstition of the cheapest kind.

Po Yün Kuan is an accumulation of halls with many images, with large suites of guest rooms and rock gardens where, as says the Chinese poet, we “ . . . wander deep into the shrine of Tao, for the joy we sought was promised in this place.”

The oldest part of the temple stands on the site of a T'ang dynasty structure repaired under the Chins in 1192 when it was *inside* the city. In the time of Genghis Khan it was renamed the “Temple of Eternal Spring” (Ch'ang Ch'un Kung). But all its lesser associations pale before those which gather round the master personality of the Taoist sage Ch'ang Ch'un (also known as Ch'iu Ch'u-chi)—the celebrated monk and teacher summoned to the Mongol Court at Karakorum by the conqueror Genghis Khan who wished to satisfy his curiosity about the various Chinese religions. Ch'ang Ch'un belonged to the sect of the “Golden Nenuphar” or “Altogether Holy” and was a master in alchemy, devoting much time to the research of the philosophical stone or the secret of long life and immortality. Born in Shantung and already famous under the Sung and Chin dynasties whose

invitations to court he always declined, he finally yielded to the call of the Mongol Khan on the latter's invasion of China and, although heavy with years, set out to meet him. ". . . I eat the same food and am dressed in the same tatters as my humble herdsmen," Genghis wrote to the Sage through one of his Ministers (for the great conqueror could not write in any language). "I consider the people my children, and take an interest in talented men as if they were my brothers. . . . To cross a river we make boats and rudders. Likewise we invite sage men. . . . for keeping the empire in good order. I shall serve thee myself!" But by the time Ch'ang Ch'un reached Mongolia, Genghis had already left for the West and the monk only came up with him on the borders of India.

Recognising the true worth of this distinguished thinker who had undergone great hardships to give his message, for he was wounded in going through the battle-fields, a fugitive in rebellious cities, half starving in the desert, Genghis received him royally, supplied him with a fine tent, feasted him and asked him many questions. Fearlessly the Sage told the Emperor again and again that one who wished to unify States should not engage in killing and plundering. "The true foundation of a government is to serve God and love men. The true preparation for the life everlasting is a pure heart and few desires."

The Emperor, delighted at this wise counsel, declared: "God gives me this good teacher in order to

revive my conscience. Therefore write down what he says that I and my sons may always see it.'¹⁴⁶

When after some time Ch'ang Ch'un returned to Chihli, Genghis gave him, as we know, the site of the Pai T'a dagoba in the Pei Hai for a monastery.¹⁴⁷ Whether he actually lived there is uncertain. The temple records show that he died at Po Yün Kuan in 1227 (the very year of the death of his Imperial patron) at the age of 80. A hall dedicated to his memory marks his tomb which is under the stone pavement. Here the bowl he ate from, supposed to have come originally from Korea, is preserved with two Imperial inscriptions to testify to its authenticity. Here too, his statue is enshrined, honoured and worshipped to this day.

Six hundred years and more he has been dead, yet every year (on the 19th day of the 1st moon) the people still flock to honour him with curious

¹⁴⁶ The teachings of Ch'ang Ch'un, as set forth by him to the Great Khan, may have been the foundation of an allegorical work attributed to the prophet's pen—the *Hsi-yü-chi*, or *Travel to the West*, translated by Timothy Richard under the title of *A Mission to Heaven*. This book is not to be confounded with the actual description of Ch'ang Ch'un's journey composed by one of his own disciples, nor the authentic account of a journey to India written by the famous Chinese Buddhist monk Hsuan Tsang of the T'ang dynasty. The latter is known as the *Hsi-yü-chi* or *Description of Western Countries*. Moreover, Ch'ang Ch'un himself became the hero of a subsequent allegory, much after the style of his own, which is also known as the *Hsi-yü-chi*.

Ch'ang Ch'un's alleged work is remarkable in so far as it contains the message of the greatest prophet of Mediaeval Asia to the greatest military genius the world has ever seen. Further it proves that the author had a mind broad enough to conceive the righteous law of the Universe, which he regards as the foundation of all true religion, as above sect.

¹⁴⁷ See Chapter V.

ceremonies, formally opened by a grand procession, somewhat like a Breton pardon, when the sacred image is shown to the public. This is the day on which the "Gathering of the Hundred Gods" is celebrated. One of the genii of the temple is supposed to appear in its precincts as an official, a young girl or a beggar, and the Taoist priests spend the night in a vigil under the fir trees waiting for his coming. The general festivities, lasting three days, close with horse races. These are much frequented by the *jeunesse dorée* of the capital, and the mat tribunes erected for the occasion along the straight course are crowded with spectators sipping tea and nibbling melon seeds.

From Po Yün Kuan it is worth while going on to visit T'ien Ning Ssü, one of the oldest buildings in the vicinity of Peking, outside the Chang Yi Môn. The monks used to offer tea and sweetmeats stamped with the Wheel of the Law in the high terraced guest room of the tumble down temple whose noble 13 storied pagoda (sixth century A.D.) holds a colossal Buddha with a commonplace gilded countenance. They coaxed visitors to throw cash at a metal plate hanging above the hand of the image for the prosperity of all concerned. Before leaving one can toil up the tower for a fine view of the surrounding country.

To the west lies Wang Hai Lou, a park with the ruined palace of Tiao Yü T'ai, or the "Fishing Terrace." The remains of pleasure grounds first laid out in the twelfth century, this was a favourite fishing preserve of

the earlier Manchu emperors. Alas, the picturesque old "Tower Facing the Sea" (built in 1773 on the site of an older Chin palace) is now crumbling, and the lagoon itself is choked with rushes which flutter mournfully in the wind. The chanting of the frogs alone breaks the stillness. Their voices seem softer than those of the common croakers of the rice fields, to thrill almost with the melancholy of muted instruments in deference to the forgotten generations who once delighted in the overgrown domain. To this accompaniment with its note of the foreign and the far away, the guardian repeats the words of the old Chinese poet :

"With hands resting upon the floor, reverentially you sing your song, O frog. But all the guests being gone, why still thus respectfully sitting, O frog?"

Beyond Wang Hai Lou we can still trace the mud walls of the old Chin city.¹⁴⁸ The whistle of a train passing close by sounds a discordant note as it puffs its way, practical but unpicturesque, to the race course and beyond.

Here the foreign community amuses itself by running the small Mongolian ponies which horse traders bring down from the grassy plains beyond the Great Wall each season.¹⁴⁹ Before the days of the Peking-Hankow

¹⁴⁸ See Chapter I.

¹⁴⁹ The first race course, before the present site was secured, lay near the actual rifle range outside the T'ung Pien Mên, close to the tomb of one of the powerful Yü Princes—pillars of state under the early Manchu emperors.

line, and the new motor road, society was obliged to find its way there by horse and chair, mule cart and mule litter—alike the grumbling foreigners and the Chinese officials who came to enliven the grand stand with their satins and sables. Far more amusing than the sporting events of the programme was the unique spectacle of the visitors descending or extricating themselves from mediæval conveyances. The moment the last race was run, all hurriedly packed themselves in again and dashed back along the ruts of the roads or the furrows of the fields to catch the gate of the Tartar City before it closed for the night.

Our eyes, wandering beyond the Race Course and its reed grown lakes,¹⁵⁰ pick up the stone road that passes close to the ruined temple of Yen Tso Ssü with its fine bronze Buddha 50 feet high. No doubt once the statue was housed in a handsome building. Now only two side walls remain and the image itself stands exposed to sun and showers but for the small modern rooflet, built over it. The place is utterly deserted save for some village children who approach and beg shyly at sight of a stranger.

Still following the white line of the stone road along the left bank of the Hun river, we can distinguish the

¹⁵⁰ The Race Course Lake, the Lien Hua Chih, is mentioned in the Chin Annals as feeding one of the canals belonging to the water system which connected Chihli with Shantung.

temple of Pei Hui Chi with the statue of the bronze cow whose duty, in which to China's sorrow she often fails, it is to watch the river and keep it from flooding the surrounding country.

Nearer to us, shining white in the sunshine, is the Lu Ko Ch'iao (bridge) spanning the stream near the picturesque village of the same name. Five long years (A.D. 1189-1194) an army of labourers toiled to make it strong and beautiful, shaping the 13 (11 nowadays) stone arches, carving the parapet guarded by stone lions so bewildering in number in bygone years that no man, so the legend runs, could keep count of them. Marco Polo crossed and praised it in the thirteenth century (hence foreigners call it the Marco Polo Bridge), declaring it to be the finest in his day in the world. An enduring monument of a more virile age, the construction is still admired by modern engineers. As the only large stone bridge across the Hun river and an important artery of communication even now, it has been frequently reconstructed. From the technical point of view not the least of the many problems skilfully overcome by the builders was the placing of the piers in a shifting river bed of mud and quicksand, swollen to a torrent during the rainy season. It was a mutiny of the Chin troops at this bridge which led to the capture of Peking by Genghis Khan in 1215. Destroyed by a flood in the seventeenth century, it was rebuilt by K'ang Hsi, and repaired by Ch'ien Lung, as the tablets under the yellow-tiled pavilions at both ends record. The fortified city to the east of the bridge was

built by the last Ming emperor in a vain attempt to check the advance of the rebel Li Tzū-ch'eng.

* * *

The groups of trees which everywhere catch and hold the eye like oases amidst the khaki-coloured fields generally indicate temples or tombs. More often the latter. These dwelling places of the dead contrast pleasantly with the squalid habitations of the living. How beautiful is the habit of burying amidst the fields, frequently on that very ground where a man during his lifetime has toiled, instead of in gloomy cemeteries. It reminds one of touching invocation from the tragedy of *Helen* by Euripides: "All hail, my father's tomb! I buried thee, Proteus, at the place where men pass by, that I might often greet thee: and so, even as I go out and in, I, thy son, call upon thee, father." Such customs prove that the people have no morbid fear but rather a tender reverence for the dead generations which lie under their feet wherever they tread. They like to feel that their lands are haunted by the gentle ghosts who outnumber by myriads the living.

In China as in old Greece, to die is to enter into the possession of superhuman power—to become capable of conferring benefit or inflicting misfortune by supernatural means. Yesterday a man was but a common toiler, a person of no importance, to-day, being dead, he becomes a divine power. Small wonder then that the surviving generation honours its dead. Sacrifices to spirits are due

to the deepest ethical race feeling, for a great Oriental expounder states : "Devotion to the memory of ancestors is the mainspring of all virtues. No one who discharges his duty to them will ever be disrespectful to the gods or to his living parents. Such a man will be faithful to his prince, loyal to his friends and kind and gentle to his wife and children."

But partly also the cult of the dead is pursued for the self interest of the living.¹⁵¹ Each ghost must rely upon its mortal kindred for its comfort : only through their devotion can it find repose. Given a fitting tomb and suitable offerings, it will aid in maintaining the good fortune of its propitiators. But if refused the sepulchral home, the funeral rites, the offerings of food and fire and drink, it will suffer from hunger and cold and thirst, and, becoming angered, will act malevolently and contrive misfortune for those by whom it has been neglected.¹⁵²

Such being the Chinese idea, is it surprising that the best and prettiest sites are chosen for their graves, that those who are able to afford it spend lavishly to please their departed, and that wherever we find a neglected coffin peeping half uncovered from its mound, or a broken stone monument, we may know that no heir remains to carry on the ancestral worship, and the greatest tragedy which can occur in a Chinese family has left the spirits without sustenance.

¹⁵¹ See Chapter IX.

¹⁵² See *Japan, an Attempt at Interpretation*, by Lafcadio Hearn, also *The Origin of Animal Worship*, by Herbert Spencer.

Of the many famous tombs near the Race Course, the most interesting and certainly the best kept up are those of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi's parents. The guardian, an old man with a single tooth rising like an obelisk from his lower jaw, proudly points out the honorific arch and the marble tablet. Like all Orientals Tz'ü Hsi took pains thus to advertise her filial piety. But she gained further kudos from the orthodox by declining to enter the capital, after her flight in 1900, on the Peking-Hankow Railway, because that line ran close to her parents' sepulchres and it would have been a serious breach of respect to their memory to pass the spot without reverently alighting to sacrifice. As this was not practical she changed her route, arriving from the south at considerable inconvenience but to the great admiration of her people.

Another handsome grave is that of Prince Tse, two miles east of the Sha Wo Mên, noted for a famous pine. The tree is scarcely eleven feet high but the branches have been trained outwards and downwards over a framework of poles until they cover perhaps 20 square yards. The trunk, of course, is not visible at all from outside the framework supporting the branches, and the whole presents the appearance of an enormous green hat of the shape worn by peasants in rainy weather.

Many of the finest tombs in the neighbourhood of the city are situated in the country to the south-east, known among foreigners as the Happy Valley. Roughly speaking the Happy Valley, which, by the way, is the best riding

country near Peking, extends from the T'ung Chou canal to the Nan Hai Tzū, or "Southern Hunting Park," an abandoned and unused domain where for years the rare "David deer" roamed in herds and other game increased in peace. The wild creatures have long since disappeared but good walkers and keen riders will enjoy visiting the attractive remains of the Yung Ho Kung ("Place of Eternal Peace") in the north-east corner, where the emperor rested while hunting. One of its buildings, a Taoist sanctuary of the Ming dynasty, locally known as the "Blue Temple" because it is roofed and floored with azure tiles, is supported by wooden pillars around which wonderfully carved dragons twist themselves. The southern end of the park is now devoted to utilitarian purposes and contains barracks, a parade ground and aeroplane hangars. An amusing toy railway runs from the Yung Ting Mèn to the southern entrance of the park.

The banks of the T'ung Chou canal are likewise lined with tombs—new tombs like that of the celebrated Yung Lu, the lifelong friend and devoted retainer of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi—many ancient tombs whose broken walls show a glimpse of reeling and fallen Buddhist monuments between sober ranks of cypresses.

A favourite haunt of foreigners is the pretty "Tomb of the Princess" just below the second lock. Though a winding cart road will take us there, we choose rather to go by the canal itself for the sake of its associations. Who would not wish to journey along this thirteenth century waterway that existed long before the streets of

Paris were paved or London had its first public lamp?¹⁵³ Certainly no one who knew of the fascinating life along the banks—the picturesque surprises ashore and afloat. In summer the open air restaurants with stone benches and tables are crowded with country folk, and the cages of their singing birds hang from the mat *p'engs* (awnings). Truck farmers bring their barrows of vegetables to the water's edge, wading in to freshen them for market. From the mud villages where the peasants raise those fine, fat Peking ducks praised by all epicures, the flocks waddle down to swim among the slow, heavy passenger boats that ply between the locks. At a little distance there is romance in the monotonous tones of the professional story-teller who paces to and fro on the crowded barges, enlivening the journey for the Chinese passengers with his endless historical tale to the accompaniment of two bamboos which he clicks like minstrel's bones—though at close quarters the endless repetition jars on our nerves. Moreover, on the whole scene there rests a charm of light reminiscent of the desert—an extraordinary atmospheric clearness through which the most distant objects appear focussed with amazing sharpness. It is a light that burns out all detail in a

¹⁵³ We must not forget that this canal is actually an arm of the world-famous Grand Canal which it joins at Tientsin, thus giving direct water communication between Peking and Hangchow in Chekiang province—a distance of over 900 miles or, as Marco Polo puts it, "40 days journey long." Dug mostly under the Yuan dynasty it was repeatedly repaired even under the Ch'ings, so long as it still served its original purpose—to facilitate the conveyance of tribute rice to the capital.

landscape—that produces grand splashes of colour—that causes the mud walls to glow.

In winter the scene changes. The water is turned to ice. The boats lie useless along the banks, anchored with lumps of mud and protected by branches of thorn bushes. Quaint sledges take their place, pulled by one man and pushed by another, while little boys on primitive iron skates circle round them like hungry sparrows, begging coppers from the passengers. The tea houses are deserted then. Only an occasional villager may be seen breaking the ice near the banks to allow the ducks their daily swim. Then, when he has herded the valuable birds back to their shelters, we see the thirsty pariah dogs gather to drink at the water hole, passing the word to distant comrades in some mysterious way.

In this desolate season the pines of the Princess's Tomb most gracefully break the monotony of the yellow plain—just as the romance of her story agreeably contrasts with the monotony of average Chinese lives.

An inscription dated Ch'ien Lung exalts the virtues of the "Fo Shou Kung Chu," or "Imperial Maiden with the Buddha hand," that is with a webbed connection between the fingers—one of the attributes of Buddha.¹⁵⁴ But the country-folk have a tradition that she was the daughter of a great prince, owner of many lands and proud with the pride of ancient lineage, who so far forgot her rank and dignity as to fall in love with a groom in her father's stables. They met in secret and

¹⁵⁴ See Chapter X (Sandal Wood Buddha).

their blood, even the cool blood of the northern east, changed to fire till, grown careless with passion, they were discovered. Now in those old times in China a father had power of life and death over his household, so when he heard of the shame of his daughter, the prince decreed that the lovers should die. Thereupon he commanded a stately tomb to be built, and placed the girl and her beloved in it and left them there. For three days, so the peasants say, they lingered alive, like another Aïda and Radâmes, for their dying murmurs could be heard. And still each spring the beautiful trees continue to whisper over their bed of stone, and passers-by hear in the lispings of the maple leaves and the quiver of the many-fingered pines the "song of the builders building the dwelling of the dead."

As we turn from the resting place of the little princess who loved too well, we stop to look at a group of children near the gate. They are playing at funerals, burying crickets who died with the morning glories, and pretending to repeat Buddhist "sutras" over the graves. A passing lad sings a song full of long queer plaintive modulations, unusually pleasant to hear. We call to him and ask him what he is singing about.

"It is an old song," he answers, "I have often heard the boatmen sing it on the canal" :—

"Things never changed since the Time of the Gods,
The flowing of water, the Way of Love."

Only rarely do we find the love theme in Chinese legends, but the pathetic note is often present in the

stories about old tombs. Such are those connected with the two dispossessed sovereigns of the Ming dynasty.

The first, Chien Wen (1398-1402), after losing his throne to his redoubtable uncle Yung Loh, became a monk in a Yunnan monastery where he found perfect happiness in spite of his tragic transition. His identity was finally traced by a poem in which he recounted the misfortunes of his early days. Summoned to an honorific confinement at the court of the Emperor Cheng T'ung, he died in the capital pining for the calm of his retreat.

Legend says that in his last years, a gushing spring from an old well threatened to flood the neighbourhood of Peking. The saintly ex-emperor volunteered to quell the waters which he did by seating himself upon the spring. His mummy may still be above the same well, now bricked over, in the "Tieh T'a," a half forgotten turret outside the Tung Chih Mên, crowned by the small iron pagoda from which it takes its name. Yet the mummy is still supposed to control not only the rebellious spring, but also to regulate the rainfall in answer to prayer.

At the foot of a hill quite close to the Summer Palace, for in China the neighbourhood of graves was not considered unlucky or unseemly even near an Emperor's pleasure house, lies the tomb of that other unfortunate Ming monarch, Ching T'ai¹⁵⁵ (1449-1457), whose reign was recorded in history as an interregnum and who was denied burial in the official sepulchre of the Mings, the

¹⁵⁵ See Chapter IX.

Imperial mausolea to the north of Peking. The Empress Dowager taunted her miserable nephew Kuang Hsü with the illegality of his succession to the throne (her own doing) and even threatened his memory with a similar fate.¹⁵⁶ Consequently Kuang Hsü always maintained a melancholy devotion to the memory of Ching T'ai by reason of their common sorrows. From a window of the Summer Palace he would gaze for hours at the grave of his luckless predecessor and, lamenting its neglected state, he persuaded one of his eunuchs to plant new trees about it and to repair the pillars of the main hall of sacrifice, bidding him at the same time take care that the Old Buddha should not know by whose orders these things were done, lest she become angry. So the old grave was no longer forsaken, and Kuang Hsü had at least the comfort of having ministered to a forlorn kindred spirit.

¹⁵⁶ There were indeed many curious features of resemblance between the Ming Emperor's destiny and his own. Ching T'ai had been placed on the throne by command of the Empress Dowager of that day instead of his elder brother—the same who was carried into captivity by the Mongols but who afterwards returned and lived in the buildings now known as the Mahakala Miao. Ching T'ai was treacherously murdered by eunuchs whilst performing sacrifice, and his reign was expunged from the annals of the dynasty, though eventually restored.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUMMER PALACES AND THE JADE FOUNTAIN

THE habit of building summer palaces and laying out pleasure gardens dates back in China to the highest antiquity. The histories of the Liao and Chin dynasties (10th to 13th centuries A.D.) show that the rulers of that period had country residences near the present Summer Palace, and record the existence of the spring at Yü Ch'üan Shan (the Jade Fountain). It appears indeed that the supply of fresh water from this spring determined the settlement of the Court throughout so many centuries in the neighbourhood.

Though certain ruins are popularly attributed to them, little is definitely proved to remain of the buildings of those ages. Even the edifices occupied by various sovereigns of the Yuan and Ming dynasties have disappeared, but two pairs of bronze lions of the middle sixteenth century were excavated in 1908 near the Jade Fountain on the site of what is believed to have been the Summer Palace of that era.

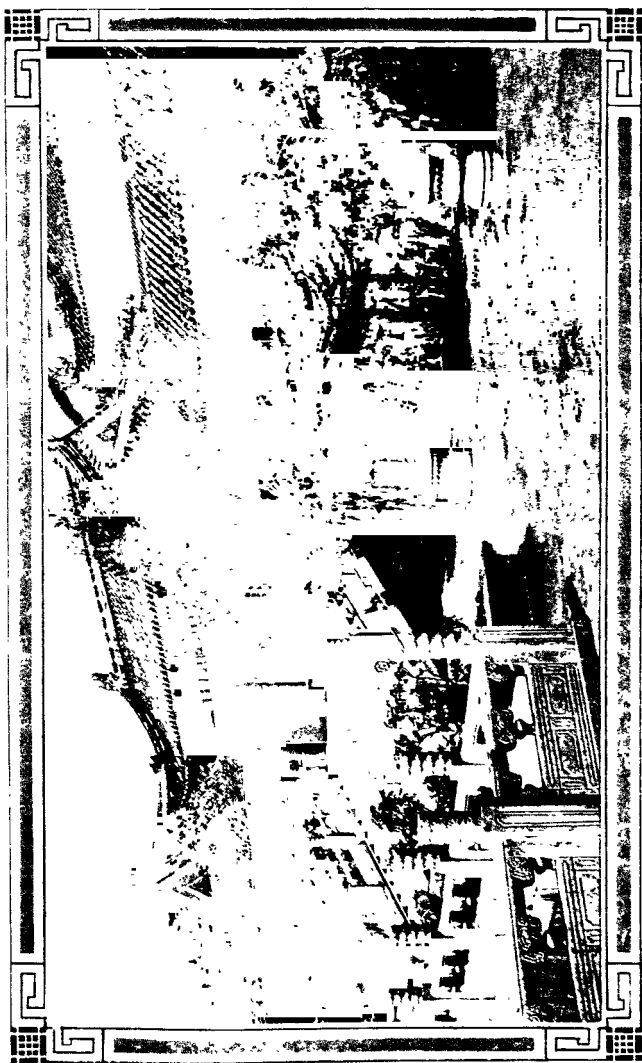
We may assume that whatever Ming structures stood in the vicinity at the time of the Manchu conquest, there was nothing worthy of restoration by the reign of the second Manchu Emperor K'ang Hsi as he set about the erection of an entirely new plaisance in 1709. The

Scotchman John Bell, who was on the staff of the Russian Embassy sent to China by Peter the Great (1719), records that the Ambassador Izmailov and his suite were invited by the 'aged Emperor K'ang Hsi to a country house called Tsan Shu Yang (Ch'ang Ch'un Yuan) about six miles westward from Peking,' which country house was evidently, from John Bell's descriptions, the one newly constructed, as a part of Yuan Ming Yuan, or what we now call the Old Summer Palace.¹⁵⁷ This is corroborated by the fact that the next emperor Yung Cheng lived at Yuan Ming Yuan, and died there in 1735.

His successor Ch'ien Lung embellished and beautified the domain, joining together into a harmonious whole the separate palaces begun by K'ang Hsi. Thrilled by pictures and descriptions of Versailles brought by the Jesuit priests, he planned gardens and buildings on a much more elaborate scale than formerly prevailed in China, even adding copies of European mansions.

Alas, the taste, the talent and the treasures lavished on this favourite residence by Chinese, Italian and French architects and artists were not long destined to be enjoyed by his descendants. Chia Ch'ing preferred Jehol where he was killed by lightning while taking his ease with a favourite—though we know he lived sometimes at Yuan Ming Yuan, because he intended to receive Lord

¹⁵⁷ *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to diverse Parts of Asia.* Glasgow, 1763.



GATEWAY IN THE SUMMER PALACE.

Amherst, the British Ambassador, there in 1816.¹⁵⁸ Tao Kuang with his pre-occupation about economy, with his housewifely thrift which in old age verged on parsimony, was not the man to enjoy a property so expensive to keep up. He was, however, spared the humiliation of his son Hsien Fêng in whose reign Yuan Ming Yuan was burned by the Franco-British troops. Nothing remains now of all the pavilions that were marvels of cunning workmanship, save a few broken stones.

As we bump over the old road beyond the little village of Hai Tien—formerly an encampment for Palace Guards and a busy centre when the Court was in residence near by, as we pass broken walls and overgrown parks, once the country seats of His Majesty's relatives and high Government officials, fancy brings up pictures of the life of other days. It seems almost as if some long procession might come winding over the bridge—men carrying banners, "silken banners that lift to the sun, in patterned embroideries of many colours, the glory of him—the Emperor—and his ancestors: banners round and square, banners blue and crimson, white cylindrical banners whose story never ends, borne by slant-eyed men in silken coats aflame like rainbows. And who are these bringing gifts? In the hand of one is a bowl glazed with the blue of for-

¹⁵⁸ Lord Amherst never saw the splendours of Yuan Ming Yuan after all. He refused to proceed farther than the village of Hai Tien and missed having his audience with the Son of Heaven on account of the insistence of the Chinese that he should *K'o t'ou* to the Emperor as the Dutch Ambassador had done.

gotten seas ; another holds high a long-necked silver swan, tall in its pride. In the carved box carried by a third is rolled a landscape painted in powder of malachite and lapis-azuli, with the dreams of ten thousand years. A fourth brings a vase pictured with ladies of an ancient reign—court ladies in trellised gardens, with kingfisher feather jewels in their hair and rich robes entwining their slow little feet. And others bear precious charms carved in ruby and amethyst and emerald, or little ivory sages in lacquered boxes, or finely tapestried silken panels woven into fables of the phoenix bird. And one lifts high a wonder work of moon-white jade, wrought day after day, life after life, into an image of Lord Buddha throned on the lotus, Lord Buddha with jasper eyes fixed in rapture, his right hand extending two fingers to bless the world.

They must be going to the Palace of the mighty King these gift bearers, attended by eunuchs in dazzling coats, by guards mailed and sworded and terrible, by musicians ringing bells and beating drums, by hordes of retainers more gorgeous than poppies in the sun. They will turn from the road into a covered walk whose pillared roof, tiled without and painted within, answers with many colours the challenge of the light. Slowly they file between the crimson columns to kneel before the Dragon Throne and lay their gifts around it. The gilded banners salute the sacred roofs of six colours, the roofs orange and green, turquoise and heliotrope, peacock and sapphire with the little guardian animals at the corners. They begin to ascend the low white steps of the Hall of

Audience, while the long procession winds like a serpent back through the walk, over the bridge and out into the road beyond. Why do they halt and delay—a moment, a prayer's length, hour after hour? Why do the long lines pause motionless, their rich robes and trappings asparkle in the sun? Why does the Son of Heaven linger alone in the ante-room, contemplative, absorbed, ecstatic—the Son of Heaven radiant with youth and power, his yellow robe woven with the 12 symbols of might, his brow adorned with the precious pearl?¹⁵⁹ Why does he not rise and go forth to his throne, and take proud possession of his state, while the tribute bearers approach and fall prostrate before him heaping their offerings at his feet?

The Son of Heaven sits motionless in his yellow robe with its 12 symbols of might, his brow lit by the glow of the precious pearl. Hour after hour he sits thus contemplative while the procession waits. For the Son of Heaven is making a poem—a little poem of four lines that shall give sound and shape to the world.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ A sentry patrolling the palace precincts one moonless night suddenly noticed something sparkling in the lake. Digging down at the exact spot where the light glowed he found a large oyster, which contained two pearls joined together in the shape of a gourd. The pearls were presented to the Emperor K'ang Hsi who said that they must have been sent from Heaven for his special protection, so he wore them as a cap button. They are now in the possession of the ex-Emperor Hsüan T'ung and are still worn by him. (See Notes by L. C. Arlington, *The New China Review*, 1921).

¹⁶⁰ See *In Cathay*, by Harriet Munroe.

The illusion vanishes as we reach the entrance gate where once the golden lions stood.¹⁶¹ Here the hunch-backed and taciturn guardian, who as a child witnessed the sack and burning of the palaces, appears to guide us to the ruins, for Yuan Ming Yuan is an enormous enclosure. He follows a rude path meandering through the long grass beside cultivated fields, up artificial hills crowned by wrecked pagodas, down into little valleys choked with the debris of shattered pavilions, across broken bridges of finely dressed stone that span canals bordered with wild iris, past the island with its ruined landing stage and tottering balustrades in the "Fan Shaped" lake overgrown with rushes.

That island was once the jewel of the domain. Unsurpassed and unsurpassable, its palace of a hundred rooms shone with tints which the eye can enjoy but the lips cannot name—shadings as delicate as the subtle subdivisions of tone in Chinese music. "This palace has four fronts," says Father Attiret who visited it, "and is of such beauty and taste as I cannot describe—the view from it is lovely. The rocks of wild and natural form that compose the island itself are fringed by a terrace of

¹⁶¹ Colonel Wolseley who came to Peking with the Allied Expedition of 1860 says that, as these lions "were of a bronze colour, none of the foreigners took the trouble to ascertain the metal of which they were composed, assuming them to be the ordinary alloy of which bronze ornaments, so common in China, are usually cast." Some months afterwards in Shanghai, a Chinese asked an Englishman residing there whether the Allies had removed the golden lions from the gate of Yuan Ming Yuan, and, upon being questioned regarding them, he described them accurately as being painted a bronze colour. See *Narrative of the War with China in 1860*, by Col. G. J. Wolseley.

white marble with balustrades curiously carved. On this stand at intervals of 20 paces beautiful blue inlaid enamel vases with imitation flowers made of the blood, cornelian, jade and other valuable stones."¹⁶² Another Jesuit thus pictures the whole seigniory: "In his country house outside the capital the Emperor (Ch'ien Lung) passes the greater part of the year, and he works day and night to further beautify it. To form any idea of it one must recall those enchanted gardens which authors of vivid imagination have described so beautifully. Canals winding between artificial mountains form a network through the grounds, in some places passing over rocks, then forming lovely lakes bordered by marble terraces. Devious paths lead to enchanting dwelling pavilions and spacious halls of audience, some on the water's edge, others on the slopes of hills or in pleasant valleys fragrant with flowering trees which are here very common. Each *maison de plaisance*, though small in comparison with the whole enclosure, is large enough to lodge one of our European grandees with all his suite. That destined for the Emperor himself is immense,"—as large, he adds naively, as his native town of Dôle (in the Jura),—"and within may be found all that the whole world contains of curious and rare—a great and rich collection of furniture, ornaments, pictures, precious woods, porcelains, silks, and gold and silver stuffs." The

¹⁶² From this terrace the Court used to watch naval fights between miniature junks with small brass cannon.

good man concludes by saying: "Nothing can compare with the gardens which are indeed an earthly paradise."

It was these gardens that Ch'ien Lung, envious of the pleasure parties of the French Kings, desired to adorn with fountains of which he gave Father Benoist the direction, in spite of all the latter's representations of "want of knowledge." The required water was drawn from the Jade Fountain five or six miles away, and stored in a large reservoir to feed the cascades and run a famous water clock with 12 animals who spouted water for two hours each. Benoist's elaborate machinery, maltreated by the Chinese, only lasted 25 years, after which manpower had to be used to pump the water.

At the same time (about 1737) the Emperor charged Father Castiglione to build the foreign pavilions. Chinese workmen, with their genius for copying, successfully reproduced the Rococo ornaments of marble porticos, loggias, and horseshoe stairways for which the Jesuits gave them designs. These Western palaces had for Ch'ien Lung all the charm of novelty. He was delighted when the French Court sent him a set of Gobelins to decorate their walls. Like Marie Antoinette at the Trianon and Catherine the Great in her Chinese pavilion, the unfamiliar surroundings enabled him to indulge the age-old human love of masquerade.

There is still much magic in the stately remains of these buildings, forever defaced, and in their desecrated ruin, more affecting than the most perfect monuments. Here and there marble columns still stand, while others

lie prone in the long grass. Clusters of majolica flowers, blue, yellow or violet, as bright as though made yesterday, cling to ornate capitals. Fragments of friezes and pediments block the handsome two-fold doorways. Bits of wall show carved pseudo-classic panoplies, including the Sun-emblem of the *Roi-Soleil* (Louis XIV). A lizard scurries to the shelter of a fountain half overgrown with weeds and tares. What a mournful scene—and how doubly pathetic are all things intended for pleasure when they fall to ruin! Justly our guide describes Yuan Ming Yuan as “a palace that has lost its soul.”¹⁶³

When the golden fingers of the setting sun fall alike upon these classic reminders of the West and the pointed roofs and pagodas of the new Summer Palace and the Jade Fountain in the distance, few landscapes present a more striking contrast, few rouse in us a stronger sensation of regret. Every contemporary writer speaks with sorrow of the destruction of the old Summer Palace and the treasures it contained. Even the officers who had to set the torch and touch the fuses felt the pity of it. But Lord Elgin and the British Commander-in-Chief decided that some great reprisal should be made for the

¹⁶³ It is significant that none of the buildings or fountains are adorned with statues whose absence is noticeable in all the Peking palaces. This is due to a Chinese prejudice. Busts are considered particularly unlucky. When, defying tradition, the Emperor Kuang Hsu's head appeared on the Thibetan rupee, superstitious objectors attributed his subsequent misfortunes to the innovation. The same class foretold Yuan Shih-k'ai's downfall as soon as he allowed his portrait to appear on the dollar.

violation of a flag of truce and the outrageous treatment of foreign prisoners. What more suitable spot, they argued, for such retribution than the place where these captives had been tortured? Let punishment fall upon the ruler alone, rather than upon his long-suffering people, since, however much he wished to do so later, the Emperor could not disclaim responsibility for this crime. True, he was surrounded by the leaders of an anti-progressive party who advised him that treaties with Western nations could be ignored and effectual resistance offered to European armies. But the ready ear he gave to their counsel and his arrogant edicts convicted him, as the following phrases show: "Hereby We make offering of the following rewards. For the head of a black barbarian (*i.e.* Indian trooper) 50 taels; for the head of a white barbarian 100 taels; for the capture of a barbarian leader alive or dead, 500 taels; and for the seizure or destruction of a barbarian vessel 5,000 taels. . . . We now command that all the treaty ports be closed and all trade with France and England stopped. Subjects of other submissive states are not to be molested, and whenever the French and British repent of their evil way and return to their allegiance, We shall be pleased to permit them to trade again as of old, so that Our clemency may be made manifest." Moreover, Hsien Fêng could hardly deny his direct complicity when those prisoners, unlucky enough to escape immediate decapitation, lay on his own palace courts in the burning sun, deprived of every necessity, devoured by vermin and brutally

ill-treated by their gaolers till death mercifully released them from their sufferings.

When the Allied forces reached Yuan Ming Yuan the Imperial family had just left through a side gate, and French officers found the fan, pipe, hat and papers that the Emperor had been using still in his private apartments. This proves how suddenly and in what utter confusion the Court fled to Jehol, though the Annals record a face-saving decree which described the Emperor's departure as an "autumn tour of inspection."

"In spite of strict prohibitions against looting, the foreign soldiers, maddened by the murder of their comrades, carried off most of what was portable, the golden plates from temple ceilings, golden images from the altars, jades and pearls. Not one-tenth of the treasures were rescued to enrich the museums and private collections of Europe and America: five-tenths of the precious fragilities were smashed by the butts of muskets or hurled about by sky-larking soldiers, and the rest were consumed and shivered in the final fire and explosions."¹⁶⁴

The burning palaces lighted the sky for two nights and sent black clouds of smoke drifting towards frightened Peking for two days, while the work of destruction was pushed to the farthest pavilions in the folds of the hills. If here and there a pagoda or a shrine was saved by some

¹⁶⁴ *China, The Long-lived Empire*, by E. R. Scidmore.

Two jade and gold sceptres, a complete Imperial costume, a few rings, pearl necklaces, lacquers and porcelains were saved and sent as souvenirs to Napoleon III.

regretful officer, Time, which deals hardly with Chinese structures of wood and brick, achieved its destruction. Besides, bands of native robbers seized the opportunity to demolish what might have been repaired. Building materials were carried off by them and sold, including thousands of pounds of lead that lined the fountains. Fine old tiles were disposed of to neighbouring farmers for a few cents and used by them as chimney pots. Marble sculptures were broken up, for the sake of the iron clamps that held the stones together, and splendid trees ruthlessly felled for firewood. Truly this place of beauty suffered an Old Testament vengeance!

Later the Chinese, with their talent for face-saving at the expense of the foreigner, explained that the punishment which overtook the Emperor was not really due to the Allies at all but to the Imperial disregard of the warning which Mencius, the great philosopher, gave to one of the feudal princes of his day.¹⁶⁵ To this sovereign he said: "You have a hunting park ten miles square and the people complain of your extravagance. Duke Huai has a park 20 miles square, and all his people love him and rejoice in it. For while you shut up your park and enjoy it yourself alone, Duke Huai throws his open, so the more delightful he makes it, the more pleasure they have out of it and the more they

¹⁶⁵ Some say that this destruction was a just retribution for the partial despoiling of the Ming Tombs by Ch'ien Lung, who used materials taken from them in the embellishment of the Yuan Ming Yuan.

love him." Selfishness was indeed the motto of the later Manchu emperors. Not even their highest officials saw anything of Yuan Ming Yuan save the formal halls of audience. All the luxury, all the amusements were for the Emperor alone and his Court. Here in gilded dalliance the Only Man shut out all thought of painful and disagreeable things till the bloody paw of war rudely shattered his dream and wiped out his treasures.

After the dark days of 1860 and the death of Hsien Fêng, the ill-starred palace of Yuan Ming Yuan was abandoned and never re-built. No doubt the place was too full of unpleasant memories for the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, who shared her husband's ignominious flight, ever to wish to live there again. For the first dozen years of the Regency, therefore, the Court was without a summer residence. But when the Old Buddha found herself advancing in years, she grew desirous of a quiet retreat. By this time she had been the *de facto* ruler of the Chinese empire for a quarter of a century. She had tasted the sweets of autocracy, had satisfied all her instincts of dominion and was quite willing to exchange the strict routine of the Forbidden City for the comparative freedom of country life.

At the outset her plans met with opposition, but opposition never deterred her from pursuing her chosen way. Her privy purse was empty, yet this was not sufficient reason either to daunt a woman of her determination. She solved the problem by appropriating the twenty-four million taels destined for the Navy to

the construction of her pleasure house, and China's humiliating defeat at the hands of Japan in 1894 was largely due to the diversion of these sums needed to strengthen her fleet for what an American writer aptly describes as "a woman's \$50,000,000 whim."

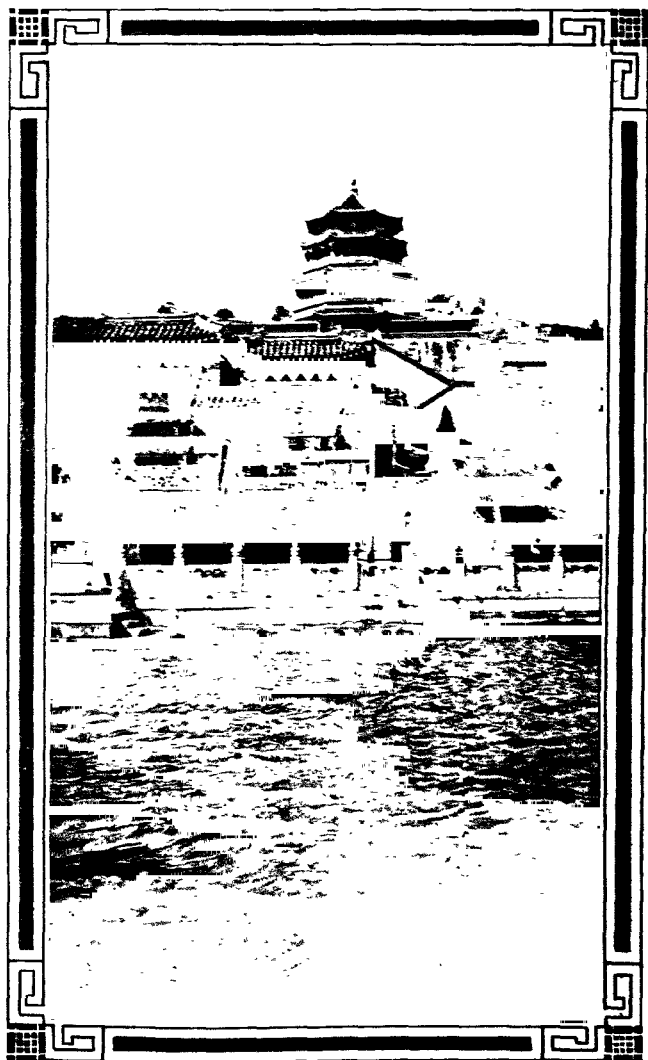
The new palace was completed for her 60th birthday; by a curious coincidence, the original buildings which stood on her chosen site were also erected for the 60th anniversary ¹⁶⁶ of an Empress, the Lady Niuhulu, mother of Ch'ien Lung—a woman not unlike herself in force of character, and bearing the same name as her own mother. While on a visit to Hangchow with her famous son, over whom she exerted great influence, the first Niuhulu admired a place there, whereupon Ch'ien Lung conceived the idea of copying it for her near Peking. Such was the beginning of the New Summer Palace, then called Wan Shou Shan.

After Niuhulu's death the place remained unused for many years and fell into disrepair. Like all the Imperial property in the neighbourhood of Yuan Ming Yuan it also suffered somewhat at the hands of the Allies in 1860. Only a few watchmen were left in charge, and foreigners clambered over the broken walls to enjoy skating on the lake or picnics in the grounds.¹⁶⁷

When the Old Buddha decided to rebuild Wan Shou Shan, re-named Yi Ho Yuan, for her own use, she closed

¹⁶⁶ An event, according to Chinese ideas, calling for special gifts and honours.

¹⁶⁷ For a pleasing description of the life in Peking in the sixties see *The Attaché at Peking*, by Freeman-Mitford (Lord Redesdale).



SUMMER PALACE FROM THE LAKE.

it to the public. Nowadays it is open to all on payment of an entrance fee. As we approach the gate, we are worried by a guide. He will show us everything and tell us everything for a dollar. We assure him we do not want him to tell us anything, that we have been here a dozen times. He says we shall lose our way and lowers his price to 60 cents. We tell him we know the way better than he does. He promises to come for 50 cents. We tell him to get out of our sight. In a gust of goodwill, he offers to be our guide all the afternoon for 20 cents. We hurl in his face a Chinese expression more forcible than polite. Then at last he leaves us in peace, turning his attention to a party of tourists that his keen eye spies in the distance.

With her usual artistic instinct Tz'ü Hsi kept the lovely lake, the little bronze pavilion and the "Ten Thousand Buddha Temple" as they were in Ch'ien Lung's day. The ruins behind the hill were also left untouched. Architecturally curious, these remains, save one graceful green and gold pagoda, present no special interest to the visitor, but with the passage of time they have grown picturesque and give to this smiling domain the one note of soberness which is needed to accentuate its charm.

The new dwelling palaces are massed in a town-like group at the north-eastern end of the lake, as Her Majesty had disagreeable associations with the old site. Nearest to the entrance gate we find the Audience Hall—the usual arrangement which permitted officials who

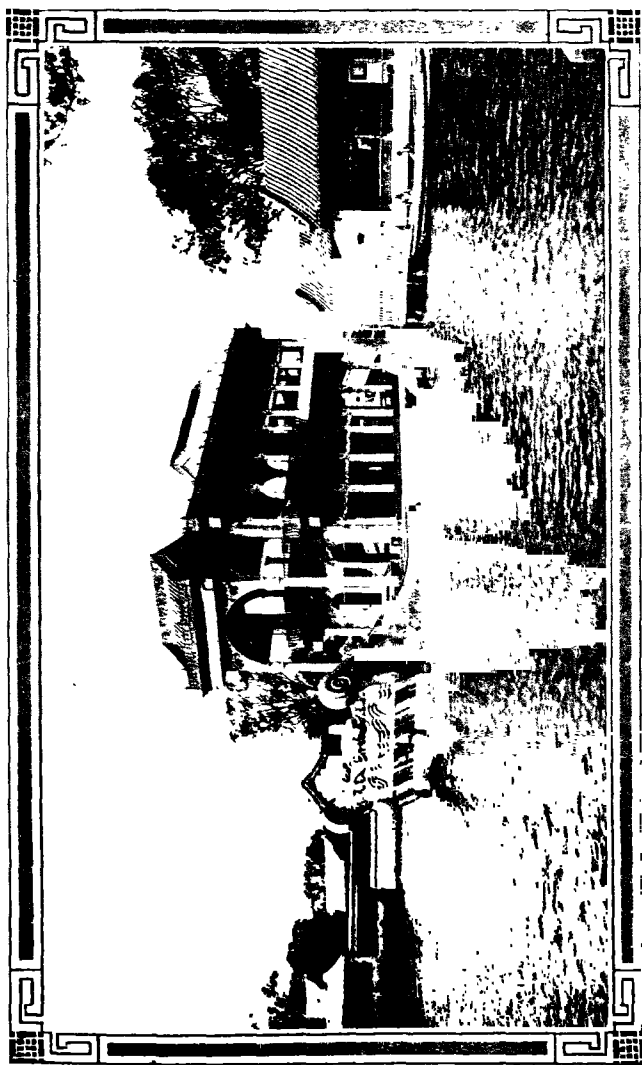
came on public business to avoid passing the private apartments. Beyond this hall a winding pathway leads down to the water and the emperor's own dwelling pavilions. One, double storied, faces a view across the lagoon that even a sovereign was lucky to command.

The Empress Dowager's quarters further on, also give directly onto the lake with a special landing stage whose balustrades are curled into sea foam and coiled into dragons. These apartments, like all Chinese palaces, consist of a series of verandahed pavilions connected by open corridors built around spacious courts. Two trees here, trained into extraordinary shapes, have been famous for centuries. If they were abandoned to their own natural tendencies, they would eventually lose the forms so long imposed upon them, but the outline would not be altered for a considerable time, as the leafage would at first unfold only in the direction of least resistance: that is to say—within limits originally established by the shears and pruning knife. By convention Chinese society has been pruned and clipped, bent and bound just like such trees. Now the old traditions are being removed, how long will the social structure keep its erstwhile symmetry? One is tempted to moralise.

The buildings are all closed and sealed now in Chinese fashion with crossed strips of paper. But we may look through the large plate-glass windows into the Imperial bed room with its carved wood partitions and the bed, built in the alcove hung with yellow satin curtains looped back by embroidered bands.

On the empty shelves above once stood a collection of clocks. These were Her Majesty's weakness. When in residence, she kept as many as 15 going at one time. Occasionally Her Majesty gave a garden party for the ladies and gentlemen of the Legations. "These garden parties," says Miss Carl in her fascinating book, "occupy two days for ladies, and gentlemen are not received at the same time. . . . When the ladies arrived, all walked over (from the Foreign Office, distant only a few hundred yards from the official entrance) to the gate of the Palace, and after entering went to a pavilion on the right of the Audience Hall, where they arranged themselves in the order in which they were to be presented. The verandah and large marble platform were shaded with tent-like silken awnings and covered, for the day, with red carpets, the latter—a concession to foreign taste. . . . A double line of Princesses led by the Princess Imperial descended the steps of the Audience Hall, and met the ladies on the marble platform. The princesses then turned and preceded them into the Audience Hall. Here they separated and stood in a picturesque group on either side of the throne dais. In the dim obscurity sat the Empress Dowager on the Dynastic Throne, with the Emperor at her left. In front of Her Majesty stood the official table with its cover of Imperial yellow, reaching to the ground. . . . and gay with pyramids of fruits and flowers. The ladies made three reverences on entering and, after the formal presentations were over, the Empress Dowager descended

from the dais. One of her yellow satin chairs was brought, and she sat down at the right side of the Audience Hall. The ladies were then collectively presented by Her Majesty to the young Empress and the Princess Imperial, and tea was ordered while the guests stood round the Empress Dowager's chair and she said a few words (through an interpreter, of course) to each informally. When tea was finished the ladies, conducted by the eunuchs and accompanied by the princesses, went through the court of the theatre, past the palace of the young Empress, across Her Majesty's court to the throne-room where luncheon was served. After luncheon, at which the Imperial princesses acted as hostesses, the visiting ladies went to the marble terrace overlooking the lake where they were met by the young Empress and the secondary wife of the Emperor, for they were never present at the table when the foreign ladies were entertained, any more than Her Majesty herself. . . . The Empress Dowager's barge did not lead the Palace fleet that day. There were three big houseboats, each of which ponderous affairs had a large cabin with a yellow-covered seat for Her Majesty which, though she never used it, was never occupied by any one else. We were rowed across the lake, first to the island where the palace and small temple adjacent were visited, and afterwards to the Marble Boat. On the lower deck, where was the best view of the lake, light refreshments, sweets and fruits were served. When the tour of the lake was finished, the ladies made their adieux to Their



"MARBLE BOAT"—SUMMER PALACE.

Majesties and left the Palace grounds for the Foreign Office, where they took their own chairs and carriages for Peking."

A pretty theatre near the private apartments is remarkable as having three stories. "It is raised about 12 feet from the ground and its main floor is on a level with the Imperial loge. A cellar below is used for storing the few pieces of scenery for the plays and the few simple devices for manipulating it. Like the Greek theatre the stage is open on three sides and the actors come out and speak their parts, their entrance being to the left and their exit to the right of the stage through curtains. . . . The steps which lead to the second and third stages are behind the scenes. These upper platforms are used for spectacular plays and tableaux when the players group themselves in pyramidal form and speak their lines. When princes and nobles were invited to the Palace for theatrical performances, they occupied the boxes that run at right angles to the Imperial loge. There are no chairs in the boxes; the occupants sat Turkish fashion upon the floor, for no courtier can occupy a chair when in presence of the Sovereign. A huge screen of painted silk, 12 feet high, stretched from the last of the boxes occupied by the princes to the stage, allowing the latter to be perfectly seen by the occupants of the boxes but cutting off their view of the Imperial loge whence the Empress and her ladies viewed the play." ¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ *With the Empress Dowager*, by Katherine A. Carl.

None of the buildings at Yi Ho Yuan can compare with those in the Forbidden City. But what they lost in grandeur they gained in informality. And what the apartments lacked in space was made up for by roofing-over the courtyards with honey-coloured mattings, thus transforming them into cool outdoor living rooms like Spanish patios.

Of course, the greatest feature of the New Summer Palace is its setting. Eminences and natural undulations have been made the most of as sites for palaces and temples, and the grounds laid out with all the art the Chinese landscape gardener has at his command. A covered walk decorated with pictures of the surrounding scenery follows the marble terrace which runs the length of the northern side of the lake. Pavilions at intervals vary the monotony of line, or accent the indentations of the banks. Landing places and handsome *p'ai lous* also lend variety to this terrace which is guarded by two famous bronze lions. These two lions (facing the ornamental archway on the way from the Empress Dowager's quarters to the Marble Boat) are not only works of art but are historically interesting. Legend says they were cast by Sun Ch'üan, one of the three princes of the period of the Three Kingdoms (221-265 A.D.) who reigned at Nanking and at Hanyang. In the latter place these lions were said to have stood in his palace. They were transported to the Yi Ho Yuan by Ch'ien Lung. The antiquity of their origin is, of course, exaggerated. Nevertheless, to-day, with their glorious



PAINTED GALLERY—SUMMER PALACE.

"five coloured" patina due to the richness of their gold and silver alloy, they are beautiful with the beauty of age. The Manchu House is credited with having recently refused an offer of two million dollars made for them by the Peking Curio Dealers' Guild.

As we follow the gallery we get glimpses on the right of the Chief Eunuch's, Li Lien-ying's, apartments and the quarters of the ladies in waiting, while looking to the left, across the lake, we see through the trees Ch'ien Lung's bronze cow on the bare space which represents a beach, and, beyond, the 17-arched marble bridge leading to a verdure-clad island floating peacefully on the bosom of the blue water. The little temple on it seems part of the natural formation of stone from which it rises. It is dedicated to the most famous dragon in China. Further to the west we see the odd-shaped "Hunchback Bridge"—with its single arch 30 feet high—high enough to allow the old Imperial barges to pass underneath without lowering their masts—while straight before us stands the temple-crowned hill.

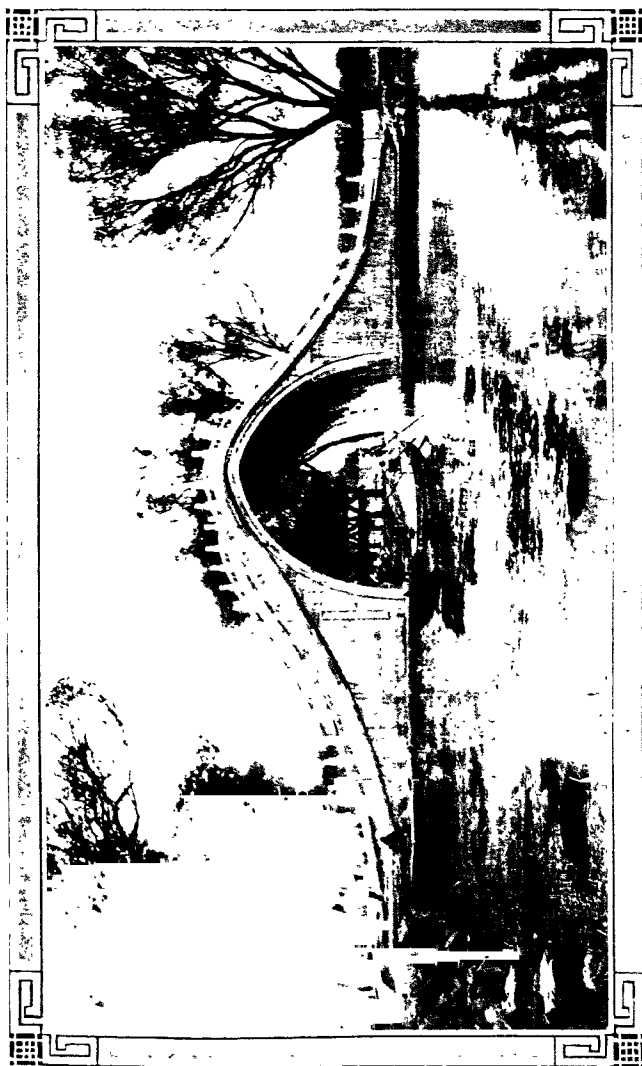
Wherever possible in the grounds, flowers are planted and they succeed each other almost the whole year round, each in their season. Spring brings the flowing fruit-trees—dainty powder-puffs of petals—so long domesticated and caressed by the hand of man in this Eastern land that they have, as the Chinese say, acquired souls and strive to show their gratitude, like women loved, by making themselves more beautiful for man's sake. Next come the lilacs with their soothing and refreshing

scent. Then the peonies on the "flowery mountain"—a mass of blooms of exquisite blended colours and faint, evanescent perfume. Later, all together in summer's prodigality, the lotuses shedding a riotous sweetness that plays upon the senses, oleanders pink as painted lips, and pomegranates like scarlet wounds. Finally, with the cool days of autumn, purple asters fill the flower-beds and chrysanthemums, like groups of ambassadors in full dress, turn the grounds into a blaze of glory.

The climb to the "Temple of Ten Thousand Buddhas" needs courage and endurance. But we are urged on by the glimpse of roofs that tell to the sky in every tilted line the tale of another and more fantastic age. In colour these constructions are not less attractive than in form, owing to the fine use of polychromatic tiles. Half way we stop at Ch'ien Lung's bronze pavilion, one of the few buildings that defied the fire in 1860, because the pillars, beams, tiles and ornamental appendages were all moulded in metal, cast, it is said, by the Jesuits. A favourite ode of Ch'ien Lung's composition extols the view of the K'un Ming Hu (the lake).¹⁶⁹

Here we are overtaken by the tourists which our would-be guide has hurried after us. The Girl From

¹⁶⁹ The name comes from the Han dynasty when it was given to a lake near Hsi An Fu, the metropolis of the period in the province of Shensi, on which the Emperor Wu Ti had a fleet of war junks manœuvring to exercise the sailors for the conquest of the world. The Summer Palace lake, four miles in circumference, was the first of the inland waters of China to bear armed steamers, when the Empress Dowager had a fleet of model ships built at her command the year before the Boxer troubles. This lake was begun under the Ming dynasty in 1476.



“CAMEL-BACK BRIDGE”—SUMMER PALACE LAKE.

Missouri immediately inquired if she could buy the bronze pavilion. She said it showed how artistic the Chinese were, and thought it would look real sweet in the garden at home. Her father thought not—too badly damaged. Something new would be more decorative. Then she talked a lot about the view. She had heard Ch'ien Lung liked it—an excellent reason to halt and rest.

But the Professor declared there was a much better view from the temple higher up. It was a long winding climb getting to the top through rock galleries, and the Girl said any civilised country would insist on the introduction of an elevator. The Professor, for a staid man inclined to be short of breath, waxed enthusiastic over the lovely scene we looked down upon. "Just like a description from the Arabian Nights—a fairy land of quaint-shaped summer houses, soft pink walls, rainbow roofs, lacquered columns, white marble arches and camel-backed bridges against the background of the hills, so varied in outline, so soft and tender and beautiful in their ever-changing colours. Nature and art, my dear, everywhere blended, it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins." He rather fancied himself as a scholar and enjoyed poking around the "Temple of Ten Thousand Buddhas" "so-called from its being built in glazed yellow tiles each representing a niche for a seated figure of Buddha." "That's nearly the number of dental parlours in Chicago," the Girl remarked.

But the Professor declined to be disturbed by her irreverent comparisons. He had found a slab with a

poem on it which he insisted on translating, probably wrongly judging by the smile of the guide. Anyway it was a pretty poem :

“The shadows up the terrace creep in thick array,
The boy was told in vain to sweep them all away.
The setting sun had just dispersed the gathering train,
When lo, the moon would set them up again.”

He assured us it was written by a woman, the favourite of an emperor. “Can’t you picture her? Her hair was the colour of thunder clouds and mysteriously combed with bands and volutes, with ellipses and convolutions. Phoenix enamelled pins held these in place and decorated the brow and the part above the ears. Her eyebrow was like a willow leaf, the shape of a new moon; her eyes clear as autumn water, white and black distinctly defined. Golden ear-rings lengthened her face to the shape of a lotus bud. And her garments were worthy of a form supple as a young bamboo. She wore an upper jacket of silk embroidered with a round *p’u tzŭ* indicating her rank, and her skirts were green and broke in rustling waves about her feet. The buttons which fastened her garments were of pure jade, and on her fingers were rings set with the eight precious jewels.”

“Some girl!” remarked the Father absent-mindedly as he scrawled figures on a bit of paper. At last he said: “I wish our firm could have had the contract for lighting this place, daughter. I figure a neat little power plant behind the hill would have been a darned sight better than that dinky little thing they’ve got down near the lake. And I guess there must have been

some profit on replacing broken globes if Her Majesty's servants were as careless as those we have over at the hotel."

Then we all climbed down again, rather shaky in the knees. The Girl leaned with her back against the wall at the bottom and wondered whether it had been worth while anyway, for there were buildings in New York twice as high. "Yes m'am," she told me, "twice as high and they have elevators to take you up and down. Now, I guess there's no ice water to be got here!"

There was no ice water but we said you could get luke-warm lemonade on the marble boat, so we all walked there to find "a curiosity, but not a thing of beauty"—the only disillusion in Yi Ho Yuan! As some witty person remarked: "China wanted a navy, but all she got was a marble boat with a hideous wooden cabin, painted to imitate stone, where tourists buy hot beer or 'soft drinks'." There we left our companion, Father still figuring before a glass of mineral water: "Yes, m'am, I'm on the waggon, have been for two years, makes for efficiency"—the Professor chewing the cud of guide book facts, and the Girl exclaiming: "If I hadn't been born in God's own country, I might have considered being Empress of China and living in this palace. It's awfully romantic and with steam heat, and elevators, I guess those views would be fine."

We left the party here to visit the tomb of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, and found it outside the palace wall after much difficulty, as hitherto no visitors, save one

Japanese savant, had cared to look for it. With inexcusable irreverence, the palace electric light works were installed in a building just in front of the tomb, and it is necessary to pass through a room filled with dilapidated and rusty machinery to pay a tribute to the remains of a man who was one of China's greatest empire builders. Scion of the house of Liao, born in 1190, he first served the Chins, and afterwards Genghis Khan. History writes him down as a versatile man—a governor of Samarkand, compiler of a calendar for the Mongols, author of a history of the Tartar dynasty, originator of paper money in China, and sufficiently disinterested to persuade the emperor to confer a perpetual dukedom on the descendants of Confucius. In fact a Chinese contemporary says "he was distinguished by a rare unselfishness," all his care and labour had for their sole object the advantage and glory of his masters, whether Chins or Mongols.—(Boulger).

When Peking was captured by Genghis Khan, he was governor of the city, and found employment with the conquerors who must have had confidence in him, since he accompanied Genghis in 1224 to conquer India. In the Karatag, the expedition met with a creature "which resembled a deer, but its head was like that of a horse with one horn on its forehead, and green hair on its body." This creature had power of speech, for it said to the guards: "It is time for your master to return to his own land." Genghis, troubled by this message, consulted Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, who replied: "That creature is

Kotuan, it knows every language. It appears as a sign that bloodshed is needless at present. For four years the great army is warring in western regions. Heaven which has a horror of bloodshed gives warning through Kotuan. Spare the empire for Heaven's sake. Moderation will give boundless pleasure" (J. Curtin, *A History of the Mongols*). Genghis listened to the advice of his Minister who not less by reason of his personality, than of his talents was a striking figure. Eight feet tall, with a long beard, moustaches reaching to his knees and a voice like thunder, he was physically above his fellows. Morally wise and calculating in his plans, he did little, according to the evidence of history, of which he had reason to repent. Of how many men buried in tombs far grander than his simple tumulus in the small bat-infested house with crumbling roof, can we say as much?

Not far beyond the Summer Palace, within a convenient distance to be visited on the same day, is the lovely park of the Jade Fountain, connected by a canal with Ch'ien Lung's lake. As the water-way is now closed, the visitor is obliged to go by road, crossing the bridge with houses built on both sides. It is well worth stopping *en route* at the temple whose gateway is guarded by two fearsome stone animals. These are not the familiar lions, but winged monsters that the Chinese call "hou," the "kings of beasts," able to walk or fly, with power over all living creatures. At their unearthly call even the tigers obey, hastening like their weaker brethren to inevitable doom, since these bloodthirsty monsters eat

every creature they see, ripping open their prey with the horns upon their foreheads, and sucking its blood. Such gluttony so shocked the Heavenly Powers that Shang Ti decreed their eyes should be directed skywards for the safety of the brute creation.¹⁷⁰

This exceptionally fine pair guard the temple of Kung Têh Ssü, founded under the Mongol dynasty by the Emperor Têh-Temur. The annals record that he and his successors "frequently came here not only to perform their devotions, but to revel and to change their clothes" also to admire from the three towers which once stood in front of the temple the fish and flowers in the ponds, where the present day rice-fields are. The Ming emperors used to "inspect the harvest" in this vicinity. The visit of the Emperor Chia Ching proved unlucky for the monastery. When he once went to the tomb of his predecessor Ching T'ai near by, the local authorities broadened the Ching Shan defile behind the temple for the passage of the Imperial cortège. Now this defile, according to the astrologers, symbolises a white tiger's mouth. When it was enlarged, the tiger's mouth was opened wide enough to swallow the temple—a very bad augury. Moreover, when the Emperor stopped in the pass after

¹⁷⁰The "*hou*" is supposed to be a cross between a fierce Mongolian wolf and a winged tiger. Living specimens are admittedly rare, and it is seldom that they are carved in stone in life size. But miniature statuettes of the "*hou*"—an emblem of one of the constellations in Arius—are found in the row of animals guarding Chinese roofs, and sometimes they are represented as bearers of Buddha's throne.

his visit to the tomb, he was startled by the terrifying appearance of one of the Deva kings guarding the monastery gates. Angry with himself for his fright, he took the pretext that the monastery buildings were not of the exact dimensions prescribed by the regulations to have the temple closed and the monks committed for trial.

The temple was only restored by Ch'ien Lung in 1770, who endowed it with grants of land and converted it into a lamasery. In his time it gained renown as the place where a miraculous wooden ball had been kept. The ball originally belonged to a famous monk named Pan An, who resided on the site of the Kung Têh Ssü under the T'ang dynasty in A.D. 870. Endowed with the power of locomotion, this ball was employed by its owner, the monk, for various errands. It used, for example, to trot round the neighbouring villages and collect alms for the monastery. It would run to call the servants and announce visitors, jumping up and down before guests of importance, as if "k'o-towing" to them. Once when a fire occurred, it spontaneously dived into a pool from which it was rescued unscathed. Such talents caused the ball to be greatly venerated. But Ch'ien Lung, who refers to its existence in his day, expresses doubts as regards the virtues attributed to it, while observing that it certainly testifies to the undying fame of Pan An. The temple is now in ruin and the ball has disappeared, when or where none can tell, though the remaining Lama priests know and corroborate a legend

which is unique in Chinese folklore. "Nothing is now left to us," they say, "save one old bronze bell and one beautiful marble tablet recording Ch'ien Lung's visit in an inscription by his own hand." Perhaps the miraculous ball may trot back some day to its old home and collect alms again to repair the temple. But unless it comes soon, there is great danger that nothing will be left to repair.

It is only a few hundred yards from the Temple of the Miraculous Ball to the entrance gate of the Jade Fountain. From a glance at the old pagodas crowning the hill one realises that Yi Ho Yuan, even its older traditions, are things of yesterday compared to Yü Ch'üan Shan. This little park, "The Garden of Peaceful Brightness," has in fact been a pleasure ground for the rulers of the North for 700 years. Perhaps more. As far as we know, the original grounds and buildings were planned by the Chin Tartar ruler Ming Ch'ang (1193-1208). The Mongols who succeeded his dynasty kept them up; the Mings improved them; the Manchu Emperor K'ang Hsi built temples and pagodas here—one dedicated to Buddha, one to the Spirit of the Fountain and others to forgotten gods. The loveliest is of solid marble and rises from the ground like a white lily. It reminds us of the "stupa" of the Yellow Temple. The base is carved in imitation of the waves of the sea, and the whole pagoda, seven-storied but of slight build, stands upon a gigantic lotus flower the petals of which are again carved in all manner of beautiful designs.

More striking is the spire on the highest hill top—the Yü Cheng Pao Tien (or Miao Feng T'a) also erected by K'ang Hsi, and more beautiful, according to Chinese taste, the smaller shaft of green and gold encaustic tiles near the ruined buildings on the western slope.¹⁷¹

These were not, as might appear at first, palaces, for no dwelling pavilions existed in this enclosure. In the golden age of Chinese Imperial luxury, some of them were used as tiger pits, kennels and falconries. When the brave hunters went in full panoply to the chase, the start was often made from here, and here the big game waited their pleasure to be loosed in the neighbouring park.

Besides these relics, now seared by fire, of the grand days of old, Yü Ch'üan Shan boasts a tiny lake and many beautiful trees, but its supreme glory remains the pure, sparkling spring which gushes out of the rocks on the hillside. The caves above it, framed in fragrant wisteria blossoms, are full of images. We linger to admire a lovely goddess, with one marble foot dangling, the other showing its sole as it rests upon the opposite knee, the face turned almost looking over the left shoulder, the chin tilted, the lips parted with a scornful smile. We pause again before Ch'ien Lung's tablet bearing the inscription "The First Spring Under Heaven,"¹⁷² then climb to the rest-house above for a general view.

¹⁷¹ Chinese writers declared this the loveliest of the 10,000 pagodas which once existed in and around Peking.

¹⁷² So called because the specific gravity of its water is less than that of any other water in China, except melted snow-water. (*Visite aux temples de Pékin*, "Politique de Pékin," 1921).

Truly this is a jade fountain so deep is its green, so soft the shadows that move across it, when, on summer days, the wind plays upon the water as the old musicians played upon the *san-hsien*. The pagodas cast their pointed silhouettes, the little hills, whose tops appear like a Chinese pen rest, look over and smile at their reflections. A queer old viking barge with pointed prow glides lazily through the water weeds, while a Chinese poet in the stern writes characters of praise, smooth flowing as the ripples in the lake. The wind bells on the shrines above us gossip perpetually from the points of the eaves whenever there is breeze enough "to move three hairs." We wish, how we wish, to understand their chatterings, to know what it is they tell of the emperors and empresses who once owned this pretty piece of jade-work and came in their barges from Wan Shou Shan, the "Palace of Ten Thousand Ages," to admire it—of the Court poets who compared it to green seas they never saw, or to the lustrous eyes of mythical creatures—to a thousand things of which modern poets have no time to think.

We had reached the point of revery when two little Chinese boys came scurrying up the path. One toppled over and had a bleeding nose in consequence. He howled and rubbed the tears amongst the mess on his face. We gave him our sympathy and a coin, whereupon he instantly recovered, gave chase to the other boy and banged his head against the Chinese gentleman who was leisurely ascending to complete his ode in the rest-house.



COURTYARD IN THE SUMMER PALACE.

After an exchange of courtesies, we inquired about his writing, admiring the large bold characters.

"No, it is not a poem," he made answer, "only an attempt to set down the old legend of the 'Yü Hsi' or Imperial seal of jade. You noticed Ch'ien Lung's inscription above the spring? This legend explains how it came to be written."

"Please tell us the story."

"Well, once upon a time in forgotten ages, the original piece of jade for this seal was discovered accidentally by a peasant of the feudal kingdom of Ch'u. The countryman was so persuaded of the miraculous qualities of this stone that he did everything in his power to bring it to his prince's notice. He was twice thrown out of the palace for his persistence and the second time his legs were cut off to prevent his ever entering it again. Still at last he managed to convince the sovereign." The stone was tested and broke into three pieces of such marvellous beauty that one was made into the Imperial seal, another into the seal of the "Heavenly Teacher"—the Taoist Patriarch—and the third into an ink slab for Confucius.

The Imperial seal showed its miraculous qualities when Ch'ien Lung calmed a storm on the Yangtze by throwing it into the river—but the talisman of ages was thus lost. Finally one day as Ch'ien Lung, many years later, sat watching the flow of water from the "Dragon Mouth of Yü Ch'üan Shan," he saw to his surprise the current spit up the precious relic. Then in

gratitude he erected the inscription "The First Spring Under Heaven."¹⁷³ "Perhaps the foreigners honourably think concerning the story that it is foolish?"

"No, elder born, the story is in our hearts."

So we bade our friend farewell as he began to climb up the jagged rocky path we had lately descended. It was an unusual effort on the part of an Oriental, but he explained that his Chinese guide book ranked the Yü Ch'üan Shan first among the eight famous sights¹⁷⁴ of Peking, therefore it must be done. Nowhere but from the highest pagoda could the visitor command a bird's-eye view of Yi Ho Yuan; nowhere so well appreciate its plan, note the shape of the lake like a blue-green peacock ruffling its sun-gilded feathers, the position of the bridges and the palaces, and at the same time gaze over the peaceful chess-board of rice fields, the panorama of the Western Hills, with beautiful Pi Yün Ssü and all its sister temples and the glittering green tiles of the Imperial Hunting Park.

¹⁷³ The seal is still in possession of the Manchu House.

¹⁷⁴ According to Chinese taste, the other seven famous sights are: the Jade Rainbow Bridge across the Palace lakes, the Pai T'a monument in the Pei Hai clothed by the mists of spring, the Marco Polo Bridge (Lu Ko Ch'iao) at the full moon, the panorama of the Western Hills when the setting sun shining upon it changes them to the colours of flowers, the Golden Terrace with a stone tablet a mile beyond the Ch'ao Yang Mên, the king-fisher coloured rocks of the Nankou Pass.

CHAPTER XIV.

TEMPLES OF THE WESTERN HILLS.

WE need only continue along the road beyond the Jade Fountain to reach the base of the Western Hills whose slopes are rich in historical associations and musical with the sound of temple bells. The Chinese always loved these mountains with their peaks gilded by the sun or silvered by the snow—stainless ornaments of the Eternal Temple in which “neither the hammer, not the ax, nor any tool was heard while it was building.”

When in the fifteenth century a new flood of faith swept over the land and a new era of temple building began, comparable to, and coinciding with in point of time, the great wave of cathedral building that swept across Europe, the Ming emperors delighted to honour the gods throned on these heights. Where they did not build outright, they repaired, decorated and enlarged what earlier dynasties like the T'angs and Yuans had constructed, and nearly every sanctuary of importance stands on the site of some other, which takes us back hundreds of years. Hence the difficulty of fixing the age of most of these monasteries in which often only a piece of wall

or an angle of roof remains to recall the founder. Those who restored the temples always followed the original plan gradually evolved by Chinese architects of old, whose names even we do not know. "The patron at whose cost, the monk through whose dreaming the foundations were laid we sometimes hear of, never the man who verily did the work."

Chinese temples were usually larger than other buildings, because they had to hold more people. "They were more adorned than other buildings because they were safer from violence and were the fitting subjects of devotional offering, but they were never built in any separate, mystical and religious style; they were built in the manner that was common and familiar to everybody." We find the usual series of rectangular courts running from north to south with the principal edifice in the centre and the lesser buildings at the sides. A pair of stone lions guard the entrance flanked by lofty wooden masts, hung with banners and lanterns on festival days. The gateway is roofed to form a vestibule with figures of protecting genii, while beyond them is enshrined an effigy of the Buddhist Messiah conceived as an obese Chinese with smiling features, or of Kuan Ti, represented as a mailed warrior in the costume of the Han period. Passing through the vestibule we see on either side of the first court a pair of square pavilions containing a bronze bell and a wooden drum, and in front the main hall of the temple, "the jewelled palace of the great Hero," Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha. He is nearly always

the central figure of the imposing triad enthroned upon lotus pedestals within.¹⁷⁵

Behind the principal court there is often another secluded courtyard sacred to Kuan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy, where Chinese ladies make offerings. The wing buildings here contain portraits and relics of bygone abbots and monks. The side cloisters are two-storied in the larger temples, the treasures of the sanctuary being stored above. Sometimes we find other shrines, a Buddhist school, perhaps a library, possibly rock gardens, or an old pond peopled by carp and crossed by a picturesque stone bridge. An outer wall encircles the whole, enclosing also a stretch of hill slope which affords ample space for the separate accommodation of the higher dignitaries of the establishment, for kitchens and stables, storehouses for fruit and grain, and open pavilions for enjoying the view. Many temples have Imperial travelling palaces called "*hsing kung*" attached to them and all have guest rooms, "*k'o t'ang*," for the entertainment of strangers and passing pilgrims. In a land where country seats are rare and inns bad, the native gentry spend their holidays in temples and the priests, as in mediæval Europe, are accustomed to receive and lodge

¹⁷⁵ The two others are often Ananda and Kasyapa, his favourite disciples, and along the side walls stand life-size figures of the 18 Arhats (Lohans), the disciples who have attained the stage of emancipation from re-birth, but who through some individual imperfection have not reached Nirvana, the complete merging into Divinity. Thus left in contact with mortals, they assist the earth-bound to free themselves from terrestrial miseries. The Arhats are sometimes styled apostles of the Buddhist faith.

all visitors including foreigners. In fact travellers' gifts of "tea money" are one of their principal sources of revenue.

If globe-trotters but knew the charms of temple life in these hills which rise 10 miles beyond Peking as suddenly as the Alban Hills beyond Rome, they would not be daunted by small difficulties and discomforts in making excursions among them. Such trifles weigh as nothing against the score of beautiful pictures, the instructive recollections of human types, the imagination-stirring associations laid up for after years. The freshness of the air, the soft shade of the trees, the music of chanted "sutras," the splendour of the sunshine, and the grand views over mountain and plain—all these are a soothing redemption from the sorrows of the twentieth century. Here as on shipboard before the days of wireless, men have time to think and dream and cure their souls of the restless sickness of subways and huge caravansaries supplied with all "modern improvements."¹⁷⁶

Of course, some who follow the paths suggested will feel a shock of disappointment at the dirt, the poverty,

¹⁷⁶ Travellers should remember, however, when planning such excursions, that the guest rooms of these Buddhist sanctuaries contain only a wooden table, a bench and a brick "*k'ang*," or platform, for a bed. To be reasonably comfortable, camp beds with bedding and folding chairs should be sent on a day ahead in charge of a "boy" who is also capable of preparing simple meals in foreign style. Chickens and eggs may be bought in the villages, but luxuries like tea, coffee, sugar, bread and meat are unobtainable and must be taken. Those who do not care for the trouble of transporting supplies will find the Jade Fountain Hotel and the hotel at Pa Ta Ch'u (foreign style meals and beds, and both easily accessible by motor car) pleasant centres from which to make trips to the nearer temples.

the ruinousness of many temples, and "it is quite useless," as Leslie Stephen said of Doctor Johnson's rough sayings, "to defend them to anyone who can not enjoy them without defence." Others will be glad that time has dimmed the brightness of their colouring to tone with the surrounding hills, and think it more fitting that such sanctuaries should be veiled by the dust of the past. But the oftener we visit these crumbling shrines, the more we learn to love them. The more we study their traditions, the greater their appeal.

Peking residents rent their favourite temples for the season in order to enjoy a picturesque and intimate combination of camp and country life in the quaint Buddhist precincts. At Wo Fo Ssü, for example, the Y.M.C.A. has an out-of-town headquarters. This is one of the oldest monasteries in the Western Hills, dating from the T'ang dynasty and boasting, like other well-known temples, a stone tablet inscribed by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. A fine avenue of old cypresses, doubly appreciated in a country where timber is so scarce, leads to the entrance *p'ai lou* of green and yellow tiles, as handsome as the much admired archway of the Hall of Classics. We pass beneath it and cross several sunny courtyards to the hall of the famous Sleeping Buddha. This representation of the divinity was common among all the Buddhist peoples in the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, and numerous figures of the Beloved One at rest, generally erected by Tartar converts, survive in various parts of China. It was the Mongols in fact who

replaced an earlier wooden figure here by the present replica 50 feet long.

The image with its calm passionless face and closed eyes—an impressive embodiment of dreamless sleep—is fully clothed in robes of state. Only the feet are bare. The pious bring offerings of shoes, large and small, silk or paper according to their means, to place upon the altar. Why? Is there a hint of resurrection? The priests do not know—or if they do, will not explain, so we are left to puzzle over these curious and touching witnesses of a faith which beautifies and consoles those who “follow the Way.” Mingling with the sweet, heavy smell of incense, the clang of a bell and the deep hum of a voice reciting the “sutras,” are Christian hymns piped by the shrill voices of converts on the hillside. But “Jerusalem the Golden,” slightly out of tune, seems to have no power to break the Buddha’s sleep. Or if he hears, he is not a jealous god and does not mind the intrusion.

In the next valley to the westward lies Pi Yün Ssü, the “Monastery of the Azure Clouds,” the most beautiful temple in the Western Hills and one of the most beautiful in China. Here we have an example of how carefully the Buddhist monks chose the sites of their shrines so that the beauties of nature should enhance the work of the religious architect! From the foot of the lovely valley the dominating marble “stupa” appears, like the ghost or dream of a monument, deceptively close in the clear air. Yet we climb two miles of stony pavement before we even reach the outer temple gate guarded by giant Deva kings,



MARBLE "STUPA"—PI YUN Ssü (WESTERN HILLS).

huge figures of painted wood and plaster, with arms and legs muscled like the limbs of heroes in Assyrian sculptures, with heads almost touching the roof. Instinctively there comes to mind the story of their apparition told in the Mahavagga. "On a beautiful night the Four Great Kings entered the holy grove filling all the place with light: and, having respectfully saluted the Blessed One, they stood in the four directions like four great fire brands."

We enter the outermost courtyard to find the buildings all falling into decay. The roof of his pavilion has tumbled in upon Maitreya, the Laughing Buddha, whom we have seen so often, leaving the winds and rain to peel off his gilding. But he still laughs and the people envy him because his paunch is filled for ever. Such is the Chinese idea of happiness, and before we condemn the utter materialism of this philosophy, let us stop and remember the millions in an overcrowded land who have only a few cents between themselves and starvation. As Bland says, "the chronic condition of the Chinese with their procreative recklessness born of Ancestor worship and Confucianism, is a struggle for food unequalled in any other part of the world. No wonder then that this struggle has condemned the soul of the people to elementary materialism in its business of man-making and man-feeding."¹⁷⁷

Curious plaster frescoes in a side hall show the delights of Heaven and the tortures of Hell. Heaven

¹⁷⁷ *Recent Events and Present Policies in China*, by J. O. P. Bland.

is a pale picture of the splendid Buddhist description :
“Ten myriad miles to the west there is an earth called Paradise, the home of Amida, where no creature knows sorrow, neither hunger nor thirst nor nakedness. In Paradise there is neither death nor pain and there is no winter. The flowers in that place never fade and the fruits never fall, and if a man taste of those fruits even but once, he can never again feel thirst or hunger. The Blessed who dwell there eat their rice out of very, very small bowls, but the rice never diminishes within those bowls—however much of it be eaten—until the eater desires no more. And they drink their wine out of very, very small cups, but no man can empty one of those cups, however stoutly he may drink, until there comes upon him the pleasant drowsiness of intoxication. . . . Glimmering portals close this place and there are seven rows of balustrades, seven rows of precious trees and seven lakes with golden sands round about it. The streets are a compound of silver, pearls and crystal. Six hours of each day and six hours of the night there is a rain of flowers, and every morning the Blessed gather them in their robes and carry them to the Ten Million Buddhas with songs of praise. . . . Even the birds in Paradise are like none to be seen upon earth, white cranes and golden peacocks and purple parrots with plumage brighter than sunshine. And all these creatures forever chant prayers in unison, because they have no original sin.”

The representation of Hell makes us shudder with its Oriental crudities and cruelties depicting the ultimate and most solemn fact of human destiny—the Last Judgment. Here a demoniac figure is seen weighing souls in a balance. Yonder the damned are being hauled in chains by grinning demons to the fiery furnace. Everywhere the dead, priest, noble and peasant, tremble in an equality of doom. We are glad that time is taking revenge on the wicked executioners, pulling the axe and dropping the spear from their bloodthirsty hands. Still it is a pity that these manifestations of popular belief should be allowed to fall to ruin.

Yet Pi Yün Ssü is not a poor temple compared with many others, neither very old. It was only founded during the Yuan dynasty. Under the Mings, a famous eunuch¹⁷⁸ (Yu Ching), favourite of an Emperor (Cheng Têh), embellished the monastery, having made his fortune by collecting taxes with shrewd business capacity. When he expiated his squeezing of the people under the next sovereign, who threw him into prison and left him to die in misery, other wealthy patrons repaired and enlarged his chosen shrine.

The inner courtyards are still well preserved. They contain many things worthy of note—some fine stone lions, a big drum in a handsome tower and a Hall of

¹⁷⁸ More than half of the temples erected and restored under the Mings were the work of eunuchs who built on the pretext of praying for their sovereign lord, the Emperor—but actually for their own glorification and to provide a retreat for their old age.

Five Hundred Gods, copied from the one at Hangchow, with rows and rows of seated saints larger than life. Having seen all these, it is well worth while to turn aside and visit the yellow-roofed travelling palace built by Ch'ien Lung, and the charming garden with the raised terrace overlooking the sulphur spring. Shaped and earthed and planted by the monks, nature was left alone to finish this retreat for emperors weary of earthly pomps and vanities, and, working through the centuries, she has surpassed the dream of mortal gardeners, softened the rock faces with moss, overhung the spring with ferns and twisted the trees into strange shapes.

Thence we go on to the "stupa," chief glory of the temple, towering above us on a succession of marble terraces. The Chinese call it the "perfect monument." It was added to the monastery by Ch'ien Lung in 1748, as a tablet records, and is like Wu T'a Ssü a copy of the "Diamond Throne."

We get a pretty view of this white jewel in its setting of fir-trees through an elegant archway. Flights of steps lead to the pagoda, 80 feet above the ground. Seven towers of marble capped with bronze rise still higher. The carvings on them show, like those of the Yellow Temple, unmistakable traces of Indian influence. They represent kings and warriors, gods and goddesses who seem to await the poet that in another Mahabharata or Ramayana shall tell the epic of their loves and wars, sanctities and vengeance. We linger before one female figure seated upon a triple marble lotus. This must be a

Kuan Yin, she who "looketh down above the sound of prayer." "Storms and hate give way to her name. Fire is quenched by her name. Demons vanish at the sound of her name. By her name one may stand firm in the sky like a sun." So say the "sutras."

Happy indeed these gods enshrined on everlasting peace upon their marble pedestals, dreaming away poetic April days when the wild peach blossoms show in soft contrast against grey rocks, or drowsy summer days when every crumbling ruin on the hillside bursts into leaf like a garden, or gorgeously colourful days of autumn when the trees put on their brilliant dresses of orange and gold like gaily painted court ladies.

Below, on the side facing the mountain, lies the eunuch's cemetery. Over the tops of the pines we glimpse the tombs standing on a carpet of fallen needles like thick brown fur, with fine moss growing slowly, slowly upon them and lichens covering their pedestals in specklings of dead silver and patches of dead gold.

Here Yu Ching ordered his tomb, but never occupied it for he died in prison, a disgraced outcast. Here too the infamous Chief Eunuch Wei Chung-hsien, "whose memory is to this day execrated by the Chinese people," prepared a sepulchre as large as an Imperial mausoleum, spending a million taels upon it. "The life story of Wei Chung-hsien reveals the seamy side of China's Imperial tapestry of statecraft." Careless of repeated warnings from courageous Censors not to allow eunuchs to meddle in government matters, the feeble Emperor

of the day, T'ien Ch'i, devoted himself to his hobby of carpentry and allowed Wei to wield such power that he assumed a virtual dictatorship, and by his evil deeds contributed more than any other single man to bring about the calamities which finally overwhelmed the dynasty. Wei escaped from the Palace and fled to Shantung. "Outlawed and abandoned by all his followers, he committed suicide near the grave of Confucius, but by order of the Throne his body was subsequently dismembered, and the head exhibited at his native city, Ho Chien Fu." A few of his adherents afterwards secretly buried his robes and his official hat at Pi Yün Ssü.¹⁷⁹

Near magnificent Pi Yün Ssü is a tiny temple on a hillock called Wan Hua Shan, "Mountain of Ten Thousand Flowers." It has only a single hall with statues of three goddesses, all special guardians of little children. One appears to be a patroness of eyes, for ex-votos representing eyes are placed upon her altar. But the most curious thing to be seen there is a little figure in a glass case, robed in yellow satin with a handsome blue head-dress. The priest explains that it is a mummy of a little girl nine years old. We look closer at the unformed childish features and the gentle smile, while he tells her story. Nearly 200 years ago she lived in the village near by. When still a baby she was fond of asking questions to which none but the gods know the answers, and, as she grew older, she loved to climb up to the temple where the old priest of the day gave

¹⁷⁹ *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking.*



ARCHWAY—PI YUN Ssü.

pretty pious explanations about those things which no man can ever fully understand. Every evening after the lamps had been lighted before the altars, he taught her lips to frame the words of prayer. Now at first, when she wandered away from home, her parents were often anxious about her but they soon learned to know where she could be found, and her father would come and carry her back in his arms. There she would doze off, smiling in her dreams, so he knew that Kuan Yin the Divine was playing shadowy play with the little soul. But one day the parents found that the child had fallen into such a deep sleep that none could waken her. And they wept and mourned until the old priest bade them cease. "It is not kindness to mourn for the dead. Over the River of Tears their silent road is, and when mothers weep, the flood of that river rises and the soul cannot pass but must wander to and fro."

Though they prepared her for burial, five days the child lay fair and sweet as if alive, and they had not the heart to put her away under the fields. The news of the miracle spread far and wide—even into the palace, even to the ears of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung himself. Whereupon he commanded that the little body be embalmed and enshrined in the temple she had loved so well.

Other visitors appeared, and the priest begged to be excused a little while, that he might attend to their wants. We made place for them and they came in—poor peasant folk, who saluted us kindly: an anxious mother desirous to have prayers said for her sick son, a father

seeking divine help for a daughter sold far away in famine times, a young wife eager to obtain the pity of the Kuan Yin for her blind boy. The priest spoke caressingly to all, burning some little ex-voto masks for the father, placing a pair of eyes for the mother before Our Lady of Good Sight and on behalf of each preparing holy texts. How many innocent prayers are thus being made daily in tumble-down temples, how many fears and hopes and humble sorrows poured out unheard by any, save the gods!

Across the valley lies the Hsiang Shan—"The Perfumed Mountain" or northern Hunting Park, a wooded enclosure dating from the Chin dynasty. The Imperial preserves of game have long since disappeared. The later Manchu emperors, grown soft with luxury, abandoned the sport of the chase. But in the heyday of their dynastic strength, we read in the old chronicles accounts of Imperial hunts with huge retinues and great splendour. K'ang Hsi we know was a mighty hunter and Peter the Great's Ambassador Izmailov, the same who was invited to Yuan Ming Yuan, hunted with His Majesty for deer, pheasants and even tiger of which last it is reported that he killed one. Ch'ien Lung likewise retained throughout his long life the devotion to the chase which made his forefathers the hardy men they were. With Chia Ch'ing the process of physical and moral degeneration had already begun and though Tao Kuang fitfully followed the sporting habits of his ancestors, he was the last to do so.

The Hunting Park contains the ruins of a summer palace of the Chin sovereigns (A.D. 1200), and the tomb of the last emperor of the Liaos. There are also remains of a Lama temple and a fine *p'ai lou*. A school and a sanitarium have lately been established in one corner of the Park but the greater part of the domain remains wild. Delightful hours, better still whole days, may be spent climbing the soft swelling hills or dreaming under the trees in a stillness broken only by the rustle of grasses, the song of the cicadæ or the trickle of a tiny stream.

A lovely walk up the valley, past the ruins and around the shrugged shoulders of the hills, leads up to a eunuch's pleasure house called Shih Tse Wo or "The Lion's Nest." The path is steep, giving a hundred excuses to stop for breath and look down on the green and yellow-tiled hall of a once famous Lamasery belonging to a group of travelling palaces destroyed in 1860, on crumbling watch towers still strongly reminiscent of mediæval alarms, and on Ch'ien Lung's "Miniature Peking" (T'ang Chang). Here are the walls of the capital in little, with gate towers in proportion—a model practice ground for the soldiers charged with the protection of the city. Here is a yellow-tiled pavilion where the Emperor himself sat to watch assault and defence and, if any mistakes were made, to order the manoeuvres be repeated.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ The enclosure has been taken over by the Board of Agriculture and planted as a model fruit garden. Likewise the precincts of the deserted Lama temple above-mentioned are being used for experimental work by the same department.

Ch'ien Lung believed in preparedness. He also built the queer Thibetan-looking buildings on the hillside to the east. They served a double purpose, simulating strong forts (which they were not) to frighten an invader, and useful for teaching his soldiers to scale Thibetan buildings, China being at that time at war with Thibet. Now goats rummage for food amongst the rank grass overgrowing their broken walls, and peaceful peasants rest in the shade where "in the brave days of old" warriors drilled.

There is another eunuch's pleasure house just below them, quite near the Summer Palace. It takes its name of Pao Tsang Ssü from the pretty little temple beside it (erected by a Thibetan monk in A.D. 1439) in whose tiny sanctuary a mysterious tile refuses to be cemented to its neighbours, breaking loose every time it is set in the well-kept, even floor. The priest explains that the site of the temple was formerly a priestly burial ground, and the dead monks pry the tile loose so that their ghosts may roam about unhindered. Legend says that the eunuch who built this retreat adored the Empress whom he served. Of course, convention did not permit him to tell her all that was in his foolish heart. But they did allow him to ask one favour of his Gracious Lady—the favour of a visit. She promised lightly, as women do. And half his life, he dreamed buildings to delight her and planned gardens for her pleasure, seeking to tell in every stone and flower what might not be told in words. Then he waited. When all was finished he was an old man.

One drowsy summer day, too tired to wait longer, he fell asleep and was laid away in a soft bed on the hillside and the grass reared a little green tent over him. They told the Empress and she wept, for she was a kindly soul and had wished to please her faithful servitor. But she had been busy all these years—busy with unessential things as women are, and when she kept her promise at last she only saw—his tomb.

Shih Tse Wo has no such poetic associations and few traditions. But it has much lovelier courtyards and terraces, laid out in the style of the Summer Palace, and a gallery following the contour of the hill to a summer house. When the sun is high behind the mountains, the view of the landscape below is like a leaf from some old Chinese picture book. The plain, all shadowless, broadens greenly to the distant city. In the near foreground, under the very ruins of the British Summer Legation,¹⁸¹ on an out-jutting knoll below, a farmer and his mule are ploughing the stony soil with a plough of the Period of the Gods, and the wife helps the work with a hoe more ancient even than the Empire of China. All three are toiling with a strange earnestness as though goaded without mercy by the knowledge that labour is the price of life.

“That man we have seen before in the paintings of another century. We have seen him on carvings of a

¹⁸¹ These buildings were hardly finished when in 1900 the Boxers destroyed them. The Minister's family only just escaped into the city in time, not realising till the last moment that these peaceful hills were actually hotbeds of the Boxer movement.

much more ancient date. Exactly the same. Other fashions beyond counting have passed; the peasant's blue gown and straw hat remain. He himself is older, incomparably older than his dress. The earth he tills has indeed swallowed him up a thousand times, but each time it has given back to him life with force renewed. And with this perpetual renewal he is content; he asks no more. The mountains change their shapes, the rivers shift their courses, the stars change their places in the sky: he changes never. Yet, though unchanging, he is a maker of change. Out of the sum of his toil are wrought the ships of iron, the roads of steel, the palaces of stone; his are the hands that pay for the new universities and the new learning, for the telegraphs and electric lights and the repeating rifles, for the machinery of science and the machinery of commerce and the machinery of diplomacy or war. He is the giver of all; he is given in return the right to labour forever, and labouring, to find content."

On the other side of the hill, the sunset side, where Shih Tse Wo lies, we descend to the valley of Pa Ta Ch'u, the "Eight Great Places," so called from the eight temples situated one below the other in a cleft between two hills. One might indeed imagine they had slid down the slopes behind them to their romantic situations.

The highest, Pao Chu Tung, "Temple of the Pearl Grotto," is remarkable for the magnificent panorama from its terrace and for the handsome granite slab inscribed with the usual poem by Ch'ien Lung and trans-

lated by the veteran sinologue and missionary, Dr. Martin, who rented this retreat for many years. Certainly Ch'ien Lung, who wrote more than 30,000 pieces of verse during his long reign, never had a better inspiration for his Muse than when he inscribed here :

"Beneath my feet my realm I see,
As in a map unrolled:
Above my head a canopy,
Bedecked with clouds of gold."

The temple takes its name from a grotto which used to be a favourite place of pilgrimage. Its fame is due to a certain monk who lived in this cavern, dark even at brightest noon, and made himself such a reputation for holiness through 40 years of prayer and fasting that K'ang Hsi heard of him and summoned him to the capital to reward him with a purple robe and a poetic inscription: "Even the pigeons on the roofs are converted to the true doctrine (by his example), and even the fish beneath the flowers that overhang the spring are obedient to the Word of the Law." ¹⁸²

The oldest of the group of shrines are San Chieh Ssü (eighth century A.D.), Lung Wang T'ang and San Shan An, dating from the Sung dynasty, the last believed to be haunted. The handsomest is Ling Kuang Ssü, "Temple of the Miraculous Light," constructed by the Chins (1162) on the site of a still older temple. The Mings made the usual repairs in their unceasing efforts to keep alight the ancient sense of loyalty to the gods. They had moreover special associations with this valley, since one of their

¹⁸² *Visite aux temples de Pékin, Politique de Pékin, 1921.*

princesses, Tsui Wei, was buried in Ling Kuang Ssü, and the hill above named after her—"Tsui Wei Shan." Her tomb has disappeared; likewise the fine white pagoda, a striking landmark of the countryside and the pride of Ling Kuang Ssü, destroyed by the Indian troops after 1900 to punish the priests for harbouring Boxers.

At the foot of the hill is Ch'ang An Ssü, a Ming monastery, historically unremarkable yet singularly picturesque, and a little graveyard where the former abbots lie is the leafy concert room of insect musicians. A Buddha sits there upon his stone lotus pedestal half hidden in the long grass, just as he did in the days of K'ang Hsi. His meditative gaze slants down between his half closed eyelids upon the little railway station (Huang Ts'un), and he smiles the smile of one who has received an injury not to be resented. Dust and scurf have distorted his features. We are sorry and try to scrape the dirt away from the little symbolic protuberance on his forehead, remembering the ancient text of the Lotus of the Good Law :—

"There issued a ray of light from the circle of hair between the brows of the Lord. It extended over eighteen hundred thousand Buddha fields, so that all those fields appeared wholly illuminated by its radiance, down to the great hell Aviki, and up to the limit of existence. And all the beings in all the six states of existence became visible—all without exception. Even the Lord Buddhas in those Buddha fields who had reached final Nirvana, all became visible."

Twice daily the trains pass by, nearly shaking him off his pedestal, and the village children who play about his image have not ceased to wonder at that strange level rock-strewn way, nor lost their awe of those monsters "without eyes or ears" that roar like storm-breathing dragons, and make the earth quake. Thus the West has burst into the Buddhist peace. Yet the Buddha, All Knowing, knows regret is vain. Therefore he smiles

Pi Mo Yen, the "Goblin Cliff," another Boxer stronghold, which escaped punishment lightly, lies on the further side of the valley, a little apart from the other monasteries. Apart in conception, too, for it resembles an old fortress, rather than a temple, with unusual caves and rock chapels chiselled from the cliffs. The hill on which it stands, the Lu Shih Shan, takes its name from Lu, a famous monk under the Sui Dynasty (about the end of the sixth century A.D.). This monk founded a monastery (since ruined) near by, reputed under the T'angs and Chins, but he came often to Pi Mo Yen. One day he met there two little boys who served him diligently. It happened to be a season of great drought and while the monk prayed for rain on behalf of the people, the children offered to answer his prayer. Whereupon to his amazement they both jumped down a well and became dragons, while the skies opened and moisture descended on the thirsty land.

A small but famous altar in honour of the dragon-children stands close to the well, above which weeping willows droop. The fluff falls from them like snowflakes

in early spring. In the East, beloved souls are compared to willow fluff, and they are said to float on the earth surface as the fluff floats over a river, whence, being nourished, they rise again to make obeisance to the Lord of Heaven. This pretty myth is a popular explanation of the food and drink offered to the spirits of the dead at the grave side—the chief rite of ancestral worship.

With the exception of Ta Pei Ssü and Ling Kuang Ssü, where some attempts at restoration have lately been made, all the Eight Great Places are more or less in ruin. Most of the priests do not even pretend to observe their vows and care but little for their lovely shrines, built so long ago and splendid still when the Wars of the Roses raged in England.

We return to town by the road which enters Peking by the P'ing Tse Mên. Our car startles the peasants and their donkeys laden with vegetables for market. A spring of camels, frightened by the horn, lumbers off the road to make room for us as we stop before the Hsien Ying Ssü, a group of dilapidated buildings near the village of Hsi Huang Ts'un. They constitute all that remains of the best known nunnery in the neighbourhood of Peking, and are conspicuous for the high tower in their midst. In the days of the Mings a nun named Lu resided here, a wise woman and a prophetess who, with tears in her eyes, implored the Emperor Cheng T'ung (Ying Tsung, *see* Chapters II, VII, IX) not to start on his expedition against the Mongols which ended so disastrously. The emperor neglected her warning with the

result that he was taken prisoner by his enemies, and only returned to his throne seven years later. He then remembered nun Lu's counsels and bestowed on her the honorific title of the "Emperor's Younger Sister," also honorific titles on the monastery where she lived, died and was buried. When in 1527 the Emperor Chia Ching issued a decree ordering the closing of all nunneries, owing to the immoral practices which prevailed in them, a series of curious intrigues clustered round the Hsien Ying Ssü which, since the titles conferred on it by the Emperor Ying Tsung, had come to be called the "Temple of the Imperial Aunt" (Huang Ku Ssü). At first the new emperor did not see his way to make an exception for this establishment, though its most famous nun had deserved well of the State, but some unknown patrons obtained the assistance of the emperor's mother and aunt, to whose entreaties to spare the temple he finally yielded on certain conditions. This feminine appeal was typical of the influences brought to bear by interested persons in order to shield the pleasure resorts which the nunneries had become. Though the sovereigns were too well aware of their disrepute, all the Imperial decrees ordering them to be closed became dead letters, much to the monarch's regret. In spite of such high protection, however, the Temple of the Imperial Aunt gradually fell into ruin, and was only repaired under K'ang Hsi, to sink once more into material and moral decrepitude. Nowadays the nunnery is poverty stricken, reduced in size and in a ruinous condition. There is only a dirty old abbess, left

surrounded by some child novices living on a miserable pittance in the shadow of the high tower which was once a repository for Buddhist books.

Another turn of the road and we reach the Huang Ling, the old enclosure with yellow-tiled buildings in which the confined bodies of the Manchu emperors were placed while the elaborate ceremonial of the funeral was being prepared, and whence they were taken to the Hsi Ling to be interred.¹⁸³

On the little chain of hills above the Huang Ling is the golf course with very pretty views over the surrounding country. On one side we look back towards Pa Ta Ch'u and the Jade Fountain, on the other—towards Pa Pao Shan. This miniature mountain is crowned by a small Buddhist monastery whose beginnings date from the days of the Chin emperors (A.D. 1194), one of whose numerous country seats was here. Though the real name of this hillock is "Shuang Ch'üan Ssü," or "Hill of the Double Spring"—from the two springs at its foot, the popular name of Pa Pao Shan is supposed to originate in the eight kinds of earth to be found in it, representing the "Eight Precious (or magic) Qualities" of the hill.

Quite close to Pa Pao Shan, a little to the north-east of it, is the Hu Kuo Ssü, or "Temple Protecting the State." It is well worth visiting for its associations with the famous eunuch Kang Kung (or Kang Hui Tieh)

¹⁸³ A similar structure for those who were buried at the Tung Ling exists near the north-eastern corner of Peking.

whose tomb is behind the temple. Kang, who began his career under the first Ming emperor and valiantly assisted the great Yung Loh in his military expeditions, was a redoubtable warrior, always foremost in danger, so much so that he earned the nickname of "Tieh"—Iron, or "Kang"—Steel; his real name was Ping. The spear—weighing a hundred catties—which he is supposed to have wielded, but which would defy the strength of any modern soldier, may be seen in the shrine dedicated to him near his tomb, also his portrait painted from life and a series of pictures (dating from T'ung Chih) in which he and his spear appear nearly as large as the pony that carries them undauntedly to deeds of "derring do."

The Hu Kuo Ssü is an interesting specimen of a eunuchs' temple, all the monks being eunuchs who chose a retreat near the burial place of their mighty patron. Unlike so many impoverished monasteries it is prosperous, owing to the wealth, perhaps ill-gotten in many cases, of its owners. It enjoyed Imperial favour and distinction to the last days of the Manchu dynasty, and is still kept in good repair, boasting well tilled fields and well filled granaries and stables. Rows of horses and mules stand in the courtyards and fill the air with their warm and friendly scent, and there will probably be a group of labourers threshing millet with a hand-flail, or setting out the golden maize to dry in shallow baskets.

* * *

A little further on, along the motor road to the P'ing Tse Mên, the handsome red wall and gateway of a temple to Kuan Ti in good repair attract our notice. Beside them, but hidden from view by a lofty curtain of trees, lies a vast cemetery where many of the eunuchs who served the Ch'ing and even the Ming dynasty are buried.¹⁸⁴ Most of the monuments are identical in form; those of the better class have dragon designs chiselled upon them, with white pines round them. Either the base of the tablet is heavily sculptured, or a set of stone sacrificial vessels stands before the grave mound. But one inaccessible tomb in a separate enclosure we notice is a sepulchre worthy of a prince and, as a matter of history, it was a prince among his kind who erected it for his last resting place. Here lies the notorious Li Lien-ying¹⁸⁵ who for 40 years played a leading part in the Government of China, held in his supple hands the lives and deaths of thousands, made and unmade the highest officials of the Empire, and levied rich tribute on the 18 provinces. The redeeming feature of his character was his unswerving devotion to his Imperial Mistress, the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi.

¹⁸⁴ It is unusual in China to find men of different names and clans buried in one graveyard. But eunuchs and priests who have "left the family" (the same euphemistic term is applied to both classes) are the exceptions to the rule.

¹⁸⁵ Better known by his nickname of "Cobbler's Wax Li" (P'i Hsiao Li). He was so-called because, before becoming a eunuch at the age of sixteen, he was apprenticed to a cobbler at his native place, Ho Chien Fu in Chihli, from which district most of the eunuchs come.

When she died, his proud spirit broke, nor did he long outlive her, dying himself in 1911 at the age of 69.

The 13 storied pagoda of Pa Li Chuang, the largest in the neighbourhood of Peking, casts its shadow near his grave—an auspicious portent. The primary object of such pagodas was a depository for the relics of Buddha's burnt body, but Confucianists now consider them as regulators of "*fêng shui*," or the influences of wind and water, and they are supposed to bring prosperity to the cities and temples and peace to the tombs that lie within their shadow.

Within the last half century Pa Li Chuang has gone to ruin, and the golden image of the Kuan Yin piously enshrined there by one of the Ming empresses, who built this graceful spire (in the sixteenth century) and left an inscription of her own composition recording the fact, is no longer on the altar. As worshippers decreased and with them the income of the adjacent monastery, the priests grew angry. They sold the timbers and carved woodwork of the temple for fuel and all the altar ornaments. Then they went away leaving the pagoda desolate and deserted.

Beyond Pa Li Chuang, and about a mile from the P'ing Tse Mên, is the temple of Tz'ü Hui Ssü, popularly known as the Tao Ying Miao, or "Temple of the Inverted Shadow," because there is a hole in the gateway behind the main hall, through which, if light be admitted, objects cast their shadows upside down. This temple was erected in the Wan Li reign of the Ming dynasty

by a eunuch, like most of the other temples in the neighbourhood. The walls of the monastery, which was originally built for the purpose of distributing tea gratis to the poor, are of irregular stones representing a "tiger's skin." It used to contain a "stupa" called the Chih Chu T'a, or "Spider Pagoda." An inscription upon it said that its builder, a man of contemplative disposition, used to spend his time studying the "Sutras" with a monk. One morning, in the seventh moon of 1601, as they began to read the "Diamond Sutra" together, a spider climbed on to the altar, faced the image of the god, and made a low bow. When chased away the little creature returned, and when asked if he had come to listen to the Sacred Words, he nodded in assent and remained on the altar. After the reading of the "Sutra" was finished, the spider shed his mortal envelope at the feet of the Buddha and himself became transfigured. The spider's body was devoutly buried by the monks in a casket over which the pagoda was erected.

Beyond this temple the city comes out to meet the country. The quiet road turns into a suburban street, a delightfully odd confusion of shops and shrines with dark blue draperies made beautiful and mysterious with Chinese lettering. Children and dogs and chickens dispute our right of way at every step. Bare-limbed peasants, deeply tanned by sun and wind, carry their produce to the town and patient-faced mothers with babies in their arms block the gate, drawn to the city by the magnet of buying and selling.

CHAPTER XV.

TEMPLES OF THE WESTERN HILLS—(concluded).

ANOTHER group of temples may be reached either by motor road or by the railway that runs to Men T'ou Kou where the coal mines lie.¹⁸⁶ Five miles beyond Huang Ts'un (the station for Pa Ta Ch'u) stands an isolated hill—the Shih Ching Shan, so-called from the “stone scriptures” (*shih-ching*) carved on its cliffs. Trains will stop by arrangement at the base, whence the ascent must be made on foot up a rocky path, between boulders glowing with fiery undertones of red and gold. Hedgehogs hide under the stones and grasshoppers, the colour of parched leaves, whirr away from our shadows as we climb.

From below, the temple might be some old Italian fortress, might be Licenza itself. This impression increases as we scramble under broken towers, or explore caves cut out of solid rock and gloomy passages suggestive of the most romantic adventures. Such indeed were

¹⁸⁶ The Western Hills and further mountains to the south-west contain valuable coal deposits which Marco Polo refers to as “combustible black stone.” But although great geologists like Pumpelly and Richtofen examined and reported upon their richness 50 years ago, concessions for foreign engineers to work the mines with machinery have only lately been obtained from the Government. Where the Chinese themselves work the mines, the coal is still picked out with primitive tools and dragged to the surface in basket-sleds fastened to the necks of the native miners who creep on all fours along a narrow runway near the edge of the veins.

common here when this temple-fortress was built in the sixteenth century. Under the Ming Emperor Cheng Têh (1506-1522) Liu Chin, the chief eunuch and an adopted son of the empress dowager, prompted by an avarice equal to Shylock's and an overmastering ambition surpassing even Wolsey's, formed a cabal among his fellow eunuchs with the object of obtaining supreme power. Part of his scheme included cutting through the Pei Liang barrier of the Hun river whose waters should then flood the capital. At the same time he built the fortress of Shih Ching Shan as a base from which to strike. If the worst came to the worst, it could always be defended, and some of the arms stored there for this purpose were recently unearthed. The plot failed owing to a quarrel among the eunuchs, and Liu Chin sought a last refuge in Shih Ching Shan. Under the mountain he himself and his faithful adherents were ultimately buried. A walled passage may still be seen in the side of the hill, and legend says that it leads to a subterranean waterway where a marble boat is supposed to float, carrying the ghostly crew of the dead rebels. Whenever a mortal penetrates into the cave, the phantom junk sinks beneath the waters, and whoever looks upon it is immediately stricken dead.

The fortress is now a quaint mediæval ruin, but the little temple at the top of the hill is better preserved. Its situation is very picturesque, the walls rising from the edge of a steep precipice round which the Hun river circles. From the platform of the "dagoba," said to have

been built by Liu Chin's order, we get an incomparable panorama up the valley of the river enfolded by the blue arms of the mountains.

Nearly due north of Shih Ching Shan (about four miles distant) is the princely tomb of Lung En Ssü with its glorious avenue of white pines¹⁸⁷—the finest in the vicinity of Peking. They are noble trees, having the strength of a giant and a giant's height, yet kindly withal, the branches drooping down graciously towards you, like a giant extending his hands to a child. The tomb itself stands on the site of a monastery built by a princess of the Chin dynasty and is the last resting place of one of the great princes who served the first Manchu emperor, and was buried here in semi-Imperial state. It is still the property of the former Imperial family.

Lung En Ssü is only about a mile from the station of San Chia Tien (Peking—Men T'ou Kou line). This same station is also convenient as a starting point for T'ien T'ai Shan, known among foreigners as the "Mummy Temple"—an easy walk of rather more than an hour. According to a widespread popular legend, "supported by what appears at first sight to be an imposing array of corroborative evidence," the first

¹⁸⁷ This species of pine (*Pinus bungeana*) is unique, being almost confined to this district of central Chihli where its immense size and white bark make it the ornament of tombs and temples. Unknown in any other country in the world, it never fails to strike the traveller with surprise and admiration. *Chinese Forest Trees and Timber Supply*, by Norman Shaw.

Manchu Emperor, Shun Chih, did not die in 1661 as the annals record, but arranged with his ministers to vacate the throne and conceal his identity as the abbot of T'ien T'ai Shan. His decision was supposed to be due to grief at the loss of his wife, the Lady Tung—grief which the native chroniclers of the day naively remark “appears to be genuine, whereby he is greatly distinguished among Imperial husbands who usually rejoice at the death of their consorts.” “Tung Kuei-fei seems to have been as good as she was beautiful, and well worthy of an emperor's love. Her brave attempts to control her own grief and to console the emperor when their infant son died, her chivalrous intercession for the empress who had incurred the Imperial displeasure for a grave breach of etiquette, her untiring and unselfish activity on behalf of those who were her inferiors in rank,—all these go far to explain why she was loved not only by the sovereign, but also by his mother and by all the ladies and handmaidens of the Court. That a gentle-natured and spiritually-minded sovereign should weary of statecraft and long for the tranquil life of a monk, especially when the death of Tung Kuei-fei had destroyed the strongest of the bonds that kept him in touch with the world, is not very strange.” But Johnston,¹⁸⁸ after a thorough and scholarly examination of all the evidence, effectually disproves the pretty story characterised by so much pathos and romance.

¹⁸⁸ “The Romance of an Emperor,” *New China Review*, 1920.

Certainly a mummy, or a figure which the priests declare to be a mummy, exists in T'ien T'ai Shan. It differs from the ordinary mummies of Buddhist bonzes in that it is clad in Imperial yellow robes instead of the usual red "Kachaya" vestments. The "*kang*," or earthenware jar in which this mummy was dried may be seen at any time, and the stone "dagoba" covering a statue of the same figure is still opened once a year for the benefit of the faithful, all of which goes to prove that if the original monk so honoured was not indeed the Emperor Shun Chih, he was nevertheless a person of some importance. Johnston identifies him provisionally with a certain lunatic saint who made himself a retreat on this barren T'ien T'ai hill, whence his fame soon spread in all directions, owing to the fact that the prayers of those who made supplication to him were promptly answered. "After his death in 1710 it seems likely that his disciples, as often happened in such cases, embalmed his body and set it up in a shrine—that representations regarding the holy man's exceptional merits were made through the proper authorities to the Imperial Court, and that the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, in accordance with numerous precedents, conferred on him a title:—'The Demon-King Monk.' "

In the mountains across the Hun river lie the two famous temples of Chieh T'ai Ssü and T'an Chêh Ssü, the latter the richest and one of the strictest monasteries near the capital. Though these and other longer excursions, to be described later, are perhaps the most interest-

ing, they cannot be recommended for persons who are not good walkers or willing to ride a donkey.¹⁸⁹ Yet the more distant the place and the more difficult of attainment, the greater is usually the attention shown to strangers, and the warmer the welcome. Our wants are sometimes little understood, often a cause of great surprise and amusement, but every effort is made to supply them.

The site of Chieh T'ai Ssü ("Monastery of the Ordaining Terrace") is popularly supposed to have been given by Ch'in Shih Huang Ti to a holy teacher who planned the temple in the third century B.C. It is romantically situated in a wooded cleft between the hills. Leaving Men T'ou Kou we walk for two hours, at first among little garden-like farms near the river bed and later up a long stone road, polished by countless feet of men and laden beasts. The views down the gorge as we ascend are attractive. Fields furrowed in fine streaks appear at this height to spread out from the base of the hills like the ribs of an open fan, tiny thatched hamlets seem trim and tidy (which they are not), and changing cloud-shapes cast shadows at our feet. How good to breathe this pure air after the dust of the city, how delicious the odours of green things growing out of soft earth, out of hard rock—the smells of strange saps, queer

¹⁸⁹ Except for mountain trips where a chair is the only mode of conveyance, the little grey donkey is universally used. He has the advantage of being procurable in almost every village at a reasonable hire, is tireless, willing and sure footed, carrying his rider over stony roads impracticable for ponies, at a steady pace of four miles an hour.

spicy scents of mould and the perfume of wild begonias which look like pink and white butterflies!

The monastery stands on a high terrace and dates from the T'ang dynasty (seventh century A.D.). Under the Liao it was the residence of the famous monk Fa Chün, who is buried under the pagoda, dating from A.D. 1075, which may be seen to the right of the entrance to the cloister. Restored from complete ruin by the Mings, Chieh T'ai Ssü is connected with this dynasty by a strange legend, retold by G. Bouillard in his *Environs de Pékin*. It appears that, under the Emperor Ch'eng Hua, the saintly abbot Tao Fu obtained a miraculous power from the Pussa Wei T'o (the warrior-protector of Buddhism). His alms-bowl was carried by magic every day from the temple to the Palace, where it was filled with precious offerings by the Empress Dowager Li, and then returned to its owner. Now one day, when the bowl made its appearance very early in the morning and the Empress was still in bed, Her Majesty jokingly asked it: "Why so early? Is it 500 girls you want now for the 500 monks of the monastery?" At these irreverent words the bowl disappeared and never returned. Fearing the wrath of the Pussa, the Empress inquired from the abbot how she could atone for her sin. Tao Fu answered that there was no way but to carry out her suggestion and send the 500 girls. These were selected accordingly and given lodgings in the little village of Shih Fo, below the temple. Their presence, however, proved to be too much of a temptation for the hermits, all of whom ended

by succumbing to their charms. Great was the scandal which resulted from this breach of vows, and the abbot was forced to apply the monastic law in all its severity and condemn the 500 monks and their lady-loves to be burned. The execution is supposed to have actually taken place before innumerable crowds, but, lo!—scarcely had the flames touched the culprits than an invisible force carried them towards heaven, each one embracing his mate:—the Pussa had not only forgiven but included the erring monks in the ranks of the Lo Hans. The Five Hundred Lo Hans enshrined in one of the temple courts are supposed to represent these servants of Buddha who were so miraculously saved. A replica of Tao Fu's bowl and the bed of the Empress Li, now used as an altar, may still be seen in the monastery, and a contemporary stela commemorates the details of Tao Fu's life; his tomb is under a pagoda beyond and to the south of Chieh T'ai Ssü. Under the Manchus the monastery buildings were a favourite resort of Ch'ien Lung who left behind him many inscriptions on stone recording his impressions and no less handsome gifts recording his piety—gifts which have enabled the establishment to retain much of its ancient prosperity. As a centre of Buddhist faith and learning the monastery likewise keeps its importance, standing second only to T'an Chêh Ssü. More than a hundred monks still attend the daily services and, every sixth day of the sixth month, visiting priests arrive to "*liang ching*"—"spread out the classics to air." The precious manu-

scripts are kept in a special storehouse, and in case of fire the immediate removal of its contents would be the first duty of the inmates.

While we visit this storehouse, the library, and the hall of assembly, our "boy" tells us the story of a much more curious ceremony to which no foreigner is ever admitted and about which the priests seldom speak. This is the "Descent of the Lotus," reminiscent of the "Descent of the Holy Flames" in Jerusalem. A perfect specimen of the summer flower, white and pure, comes down in mid-winter upon one of the monks who has prepared by 18 hours of prayer and fasting to receive the holy sign. Though it is difficult for us to accept the supernatural theory of this appearance, it is not easy to find a more plausible one to take its place. The abbot, evidently a sincere and honourable man, declares that each devotee is carefully searched before he enters the temple. We can see for ourselves the impossibility of a trap door in the now empty hall, while a glance is sufficient to make sure no conjuring apparatus could be attached to the ceiling or bare walls. Moreover, during the long hours of waiting no one is permitted to leave the building, not even if he grows faint or ill from exhaustion. But supposing someone should smuggle the lotus into the temple in collusion with confederates outside? That might be possible. Yet, were such the case, how could the flower remain perfectly fresh and uncrushed for nearly 18 hours? Truly faith must still have power to work miracles.

Last of all we are taken to the Hall of the Chieh T'ai, (dating from A.D. 1440) or platform where young postulants make their vows. We have timed our visit to see this service, held at midnight. It is very solemn, one might almost say sacramental. The breath of the hot day, the warm sigh of the dust-laden wind, has died out of the air. The sun has gone down with the dignity of the hills as its grave and a strange amethyst light stretches over the spot where the flame vanished. Night comes quickly across the plain as though Buddha was drawing a veil over his beloved world. Above, the sky is a dark velvet pall and yonder eastward, like the press of a large finger nail in the blue, rises the new moon. It is the signal for the priests to enter the hall. They fall upon their knees and remain motionless like figures carved from wood. Since dawn no food has touched their lips, no sip of water moistened their tongues. So command the rules, to teach abstinence, and hunger-bearing, to nurture self-control by fasting through the scorching hours, with no complaining but with prayers of thankfulness to the Merciful One.

An acolyte rises from his place and approaches the drum—a huge thing with a mighty power of utterance. "He taps the ancient face and it sobs like waves upon a low beach. He taps it again with a curious monotonous rhythm and it moans like the wind in a forest of pines. Again it roars, again it sobs, alternately crashing like thunder rolling over an abyss, or whispering like throbbing heart-beats." The young monk tilts back his head in ecstasy as if his spirit yielded to the intoxication of the

sound. Moving, undulating in waves, the noise has something weird in it—something hypnotic. If we listen too long, we too shall feel a trance stealing over us. So we move away impressed by something terrible, mysterious; but the sound follows us out into the velvety darkness. The temple forms are eerie. And suddenly a singular sensation comes over us as we stand on the terrace waiting for the service to end, a sensation of dream and doubt—as if the roofs and the purple curtain of the sky pricked with stars, and the dragon-swarming eaves and even the shadows of ourselves stretching upon the white-barked pines, must all vanish presently. These strange peaked gables and Chinese grotesqueries of carving seem too unreal to last—until the sound of these drumbeats, regular as a human pulse, ceases and the “romance of reality” returns.

Now the dawn wind comes to the cheek like the breath of a woman who is fond. The melancholy but melodious sound of Buddhist chants and prayers ceases. The service is over and the celebrants troop out of the hall to break their fast. A light of exaltation lingers on their faces. We slip away without disturbing them though the abbot has sent a message that he will come to bid us farewell. From his tired eyes the old man needs his rest, so begging him not to trouble himself about us, we start off for the mountain hermitage of Chi Lâh Fêng Ssü built under the Liao dynasty. We are warned there is nothing to see but the same view down the valley. Still, it is called the “Peak of Perfect Happiness” and

every human being should climb that at least once in his life. The founder of Chi Lêh Fêng Ssŭ is supposed to have been the man who made the two stone lions that guard Chieh T'ai Ssŭ. After having completed his work he became a monk and retired to this mountain-peak where he kept a vow of silence for ten years, victoriously overcoming temptations which are described as similar to those of St. Anthony.

From Chieh T'ai Ssŭ one may either walk across the mountains, about three hours hard going, to T'an Chêh Ssŭ ("Monastery of the Oak Pool"), or the start for this celebrated temple may be made from Men T'ou Kou, whence the steep ascent leads through a mountain pass with gorgeous views all the way.

On the arch at the outer gate are tablets with the poetical inscriptions: "Purple Hills and Red Springs," "Fragrant Groves and Clean Earth." These were put up by K'ang Hsi who repaired the temple magnificently. But T'an Chêh Ssŭ is much older than his reign. The records affirm that it dates from A.D. 400. Very probably they are trustworthy in thus fixing it as the most ancient temple in the Western Hills, because the well-known proverb says "First there was T'an Chêh and afterwards there was Yu Chou" (an old name for Peking). The second character in the name of the monastery, "*chêh*," means a kind of oak used for feeding silkworms. Legend says that in remote antiquity there used to be a pond surrounded by a thousand "*chêh*" on the site of the temple, and here lived two dragons. When the

temple was built, the water disappeared and the dragons turned into serpents called "*Ta Ch'ing*" and "*Hsiao Ch'ing*," hence the saying: "The dragon has gone but its son remains, of a black colour, as large as a bowl."

These serpents dwelt in a red lacquer box with an inscription on the lid: "Kings of Dragons, Guardians of the Law," but they had complete freedom, climbing upon the altars to rest among the incense burners, leaving the monastery at will and returning to it at the sound of the evening bells. Being the incarnation of the Spirit of the Universe, they had power to alter their form and size at will. This faculty they once manifested when the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, on a visit to T'an Chêh Ssü, expressed his doubt at their supernatural attributes. No sooner were the irreverent words out of his mouth, than he saw to his amazement the smaller serpent rise in wrath and begin to grow. The tail remained on the altar but the unfolding coils of the body rolled out of the gateway, down the valley and across the hill, while the head pointed towards the Summer Palace. Alarmed, the emperor ordered a service to implore the dragon's pardon according to the rite for the placation of spirits embodied in serpents. After long prayers the serpent began to grow smaller and finally resumed his normal size. Then, in recognition of their intervention, the emperor ordered the distribution of money to the monks. The grandeur of the monastery may be judged by the fact that though the sovereign gave a coin to every one who presented himself, and continued from dawn to dusk on the appointed day,

at nightfall the end of the procession of those waiting for alms was not in sight. The small serpent may still be seen, but visitors are warned to approach him deferentially lest evil befall them.

We also visit, to the west of the temple, the Hall of the Dragon King and a dragon pool¹⁹⁰ of limpid water. Then we tour the spacious grounds, beautifully wooded and immaculately kept. The old "chêh" trees have all perished; only a few stumps remain. But there are three famous "ginko" trees¹⁹¹ of miraculous growth. One sprang full grown into being, according to the monks, when K'ang Hsi visited the temple, two during Ch'ien Lung's stay. Others are pointed out as having been planted by the deposed Emperor Hsüan T'ung and by Yuan Shih-k'ai.

The temple itself is composed of many halls, at least ten large ones—to each of which K'ang Hsi presented an inscription. That dedicated to Kuan Yin contains a picture of the Princess Miao Yen, daughter of Kublai Khan. Weary of the life of Courts she shaved her head and became a nun here, worshipping Kuan Yin day and night with such fervour that the marks of her forehead

¹⁹⁰ The dragon is mostly associated with water being, with its congener the snake, an object of frequent worship in time of drought or flood.

¹⁹¹ The "ginko," commonly known as the "maidenhair tree" from its leaf, is the most interesting tree in China if not in the whole world, for it represents the sole surviving link between trees and ferns. In remote ages the "ginko" (*Salisburia adiantifolia*) was widespread, as attested by its fossil leaves found in several countries in the lower geological formations. It is not only a survival of prehistoric forests but one of the handsomest of all trees.

and her feet were worn in the flagstone where she devoutly "k'o-towed." During the reign of Wan Li (1573-1620) the Empress Hsiao Ting came to see this and other relics of the temple, and had them stored in a box of precious wood and taken to the Forbidden City whence they were later sent back to the monastery. In gratitude for their return, the abbot had figures of Kublai Khan and all his family carved and set up in the shrine where his daughter served.

Many sovereigns and famous men have been patrons of T'an Chêh Ssü, leaving behind them proofs of their generosity and their faith. The monument with five "dagobas" (the T'a Yuan) is the gift of some forgotten benefactor in A.D. 600. The pagoda of Yen Shou T'a, or "Great Longevity," a structure over 50 feet high, was erected by Chang Yung, a prince of the Ming dynasty. Tablets dating from the Chins and Yuans and frescoes of the Liao period once embellished the temple, but these have all disappeared. The priests, however, kindly offer to show us a copy of the "*Hsin Ching*" ("Heart Classic") written by K'ang Hsi, together with an essay on the scene and a picture of the landscape, composed and sketched during his stay.

To us the most striking feature of the monastery, rarer even than its treasures, is the devout faith of the monks who not only hold regular services but appear to lead saintly lives according to their lights. Perhaps their piety and scrupulous observance of their rites is due to the influence of a larger community which makes some

rule and order necessary, and stimulates its members to activity lest they lose face before one another—an incentive that lonely priests do not have. But no doubt it is also partly due to the fact that the temple is richly dowered and must set an example to its lay patrons. For T'an Chêh Ssü, like Chieh T'ai Ssü, still enjoys the support of rich men and the favour of the princely family of Kung.

While we were there, some members of the latter occupied the charming guest pavilions set aside for them. Somebody of the clan was dead and the relatives had come to ask masses for his soul. The big bell tolled for the memorial service slowly and regularly; its rich bronze voice shook across the lotus ponds, echoed over the roofs above the Altar of Infinite Compassion and broke in "deep waves of sound against the green circle of the hills."

It is a touching service. It is also a costly ceremony; for many priests take part, chanting and beating wooden fish-head drums to mark the time. And the chant is a magnificent invocation to Kuan Yin.

"O Thou! whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and sweetness—O Thou Lovely One with Thy beautiful face, with Thy beautiful eyes:—

O Thou Pure One, whose luminosity is without spot, whose knowledge is without shadow—O Thou! forever shining like that Sun whose glory no power may repel, O Thou, sunlike in the course of Thy Mercy, vouchsafe augustly to welcome this Soul."

Before the altar a hundred tapers burn like earth-bound stars, and incense curls up from K'ang Hsi braziers that stand beside offerings of fruits and cakes and rice and flowers. On either side of this altar the priests kneel in ranks facing each other—rows of polished heads and splendid brocade vestments. The chanting goes on for hours. Then it suddenly stops. There is perfect silence for a moment followed by a burst of weeping. But this sound of sobs is quickly overwhelmed in one final booming of the fish-head drums, as the high-pitched voices of the chant leaders begin the grand concluding "Sutra of Nirvana," the song of the passage triumphant over the Sea of Birth and Death, while the surging basses repeat the sonorous words:—"Transient are all. They, being born, must die. And being born, are dead, And being dead, are glad to be at rest."¹⁹²

Until faith or love shall awaken them again, "they, being dead, are glad to be at rest." Such was our last—and loveliest—memory of T'an Chêh Ssü.

A few miles beyond this monastery is Liang Hsien, an ancient city from which rare visitors make excursions to the ruined tombs of the Chin emperors. Destroyed by the Mings in a petty vengeance against vanquished enemies, they were restored at great expense by K'ang Hsi, because they belonged to men of his own race who once sat on the very throne he himself occupied. Permission to worship at the graves was also given by him

¹⁹² *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, by Lafcadio Hearn.

to their direct descendants. Once during his devotions, a youthful scion of the ancient royal house was startled by a tiger watching him. "Do not fear," said the beast, "though you may not be aware of it, I am deputed to guard these sepulchres. Therefore do not attempt to harm me, and I will continue to protect you and your forefathers." The young man then "k'o-towed" to the sacred animal, and gave orders to his retainers that it should never be molested.¹⁹³

Eleven miles from Liang Hsien a short railway branches off from Liu Li Ho (on the Peking-Hankow line), whence one may make a trip to the well-known grottoes of Yuan Shui Tung beyond Shang Fang Shan. This is a long and difficult trip requiring all the usual paraphernalia for a journey into the interior, such as beds, food for several days, etc., and in addition a plentiful supply of lamps and candles to explore the caverns. Carts can be used from Liu Li Ho as far as Hsi Yü Ssü (a fine temple dating from the sixth century A.D.), but from Hsi Yü Ssü to Shang Fang Shan is hard walking. Nevertheless the excursion is its own reward. The stalactites and stalagmites of the caves are magnificent, and the floor of the largest vault reminds one of

¹⁹³*Visite aux temples de Pékin.*—The idea of a tiger guarding graves is widespread. A certain mythical animal is supposed to prowl around them with intent to eat the brains of the dead. It fears but two foes: tigers and pine trees. Hence the common custom of planting at least one pine tree near an important grave, and the less frequent representation of a stone tiger where his living prototype would not be practical or popular.

dragons writhing and twisting towards what might be a gigantic Buddha's throne.

There are besides several charming trips to be made up the valley of the Hun river, notably one to a certain Niang Niang Miao about three hours distant from San Chia Tien.¹⁹⁴ But the best known is undoubtedly that to the Miao Fêng Shan, perhaps the most beautiful of all trips in the Western Hills. This may be made by any one of five different routes, all through rough country. The easiest way is *viâ* San Chia Tien, but only the best and most enduring walkers should attempt even this route on foot.¹⁹⁵

The road mounts slowly at first, following the river and crossing and re-crossing the beds of tributary streams that become raging torrents in the rainy season. At other times they are simply heaps of stones with here and there shallow pools left where the subsoil prevents the water from trickling away. These serve as washing places for the country women.

We pass through the hamlet of T'ao Yuan, alive with brown children and wolfish dogs, thence up a gradual ascent to 2,500 feet above sea level. For two hours and a half the ranges of mountains to left and right alternately recede and approach. Beautiful blue shapes glide toward us, change to green and then, slowly drifting past, are all

¹⁹⁴ Niang Niang Poussa, or Heavenly Mother, is a Taotai deity which vaguely corresponds in some of her attributes to the Buddhist Kuan Yin. Hundreds of shrines are dedicated to her.

¹⁹⁵ Chairs, moderately comfortable, can be procured if due notice is given.

blue again. Suddenly we drop down a little to Chien Kou, a most picturesque village in a valley gay with flowering fruit trees, and immediately ahead towers our goal, a huge dark rock tipped with the monastery of Ling Kan Kung and Miao Fêng Shan, the sacred mountain behind it. On again we start for the summit, a last climb of a thousand feet with a final flight of rough rock steps which our bearers, with indefatigable spirit and good humour, take at a run.

We lodge in the temple whose terrace literally overhangs the valley. Spread out at our feet lies a jumble of mountain ranges, peaks and gorges, an uninterrupted view for a hundred miles over all the surrounding country, including the Po Hua Shang, the Nankou hills and the distant capital—a colossal panorama, the memory of which can never fade.

Yet to see the view at its fullest beauty is given only to those who look on it at sunrise, so aptly called the "Hour of Illusion." Oh, the charm of that first vision of slowly lifting mists and the first ghostly love-colours of the dawn, while the faint scent of rose-bushes on the hill-side is wafted down! Soon the faint yellow glare in the east runs along the mountain-tops like a wind-blown fire. More and more luminous grows the hollow world till the sun, rising like a golden ball, tears the veil from farthest horizons. The river shines like a gilded spider's thread, while the villages, still in shadow, are grey dust clinging to the grey-blue valleys and the city is a mere pin-point in the tinted dream of mountain and plain. Much enchant-

ment passes with the vapours : in the raw clear light we lose the jasper palaces and sails of gold but see only flimsy sheds of mud and thatch and the unpainted queerness of ferry barges. "So perhaps it is with all that makes life beautiful in any land. To view men or nature with delight, we must see them through illusions, subjective or objective. Happiest he who from birth to death sees ever through some ideal soul haze, best of all that haze of love which, like the vapours of the dawn, glorifies common things."

None of the temples on Miao Fêng Shan have any artistic merit. But they house three Taoist female deities one of whom confers children on the childless, and they are very sacred. From the 1st to the 18th of the fourth month, when thousands of pilgrims visit them,¹⁹⁶ Chinese women desirous of a son will make the whole ascent on their knees, prostrating themselves every few yards, to pray before the goddess. Having done this they are confident that their desire will be rewarded.

Returning by way of Ta Chüeh Ssü or "Monastery of the Great Awakening," down the slippery stone road

¹⁹⁶ In planning a trip to Miao Fêng Shan it is better to avoid the two weeks (in May) when the pilgrimage takes place, as temples are crowded then and chair bearers difficult to procure. With regard to the best season for hill excursions in general, perhaps September and October are on the whole the most pleasant months. April and May, when the fruit trees are in bloom, may be equally delightful, provided there are no high winds to raise the clouds of suffocating dust that make travelling in North China intolerable. In winter the absence of vegetation makes the country look bare, and it is too cold to remain overnight in unheated temples, whereas in the middle of summer the rainy season brings with it impossible roads and a host of insect pests.

which it is better to descend than to ascend, we meet these pilgrims singly or in groups, with flags and drums and bells. We pass again through Chien Kou, gay now with peddlers and food-vendors, and climb the Yang Shan 3,000 feet high. Thence the descent to Ta Chüeh Ssü is terrifyingly steep, skirting the edge of precipitous cliffs. The sensation of being carried down in chairs backwards, according to the custom, is decidedly unpleasant. But as we stumble continually when we attempt to walk, we soon get in our open sedans again to endure the lesser evil. A bad slip would mean a fall over the precipice with little chance of recovery, and once fallen the victim would have no further personal interest in the trip. Moreover, we soon find that the chair coolies never make a false step, never seem less at ease than they would be walking over flat ground. Their feet always poise upon the stones at exactly the right angle and they seem to move lightly as birds.

Three hours suffice for the drop down to Ta Chüeh Ssü. After travelling steadily since early morning, it is enchanting to rest in this peaceful, aged temple. Outside, the bearers are laughing and shouting, but all is quiet here save for the murmur of little streams of clear water (that most priceless boon throughout the hills) and the chatter of magpies in the pines. Once upon a time Ta Chüeh Ssü must have been a magnificent place, comparable perhaps to Chieh T'ai Ssü. Built on the ruins of an old Liao temple, it was one of the Eight Resting Places in the Western Hills of a Chin emperor, towards

the end of the twelfth century. Under the Mings, judging by several stone inscriptions, and under the earlier Manchus, its prosperity was so great that 200 monks were daily served in the refectory. The guest-rooms of the monastery accommodated thousands of pilgrims on their way to Miao Fêng Shan, and the huge ovens smoked continuously to supply passing guests. The melancholy beauty of K'ang Hsi's throne room in a garden court, sweet with the scent of peonies and shaded by magnolia trees, is very touching. To feel its soothing atmosphere, one must see the weirdness of desolation—the beautiful neutral tones of old timbers, the dim shades of walls surfaces, the eccentricities of disjointing, the extraordinary carvings under eaves—once splendid with lacquer, now faded to the tint of smoke and looking as if about to curl away like smoke and vanish.

Several halls still remain intact with a few gods the colour of old copper before it is cleaned. Better worth seeing are two superb “ginko” trees, said to be more than a thousand years old, which, when autumn tints their leaves, look like the dream of some multi-millionaire who has hung out all his wealth of gold pieces to glitter in the sun. But best of all is the garden left to grow at its own sweet will. Here there is a pool, always cool in the green silence, fringed with violets and iris and ferns. Maples and pines, full of whispers—those little noiseless noises—overhang the pretty summer-houses. How many pilgrims have come to forget, in the twilight of the green trees and the silence of centuries, the city and its turmoil,

and dream out of time and space. How many potentates, as they sat musing in the pavilion above the spring, watching the full moon rise over this temple garden, have murmured the Buddhist poem: "From the foot of the mountain, many are the paths ascending in shadow, but from the terrace all who climb behold the self-same moon."

In this garden the gnarled branches of picturesque pines lovingly entwine an old "sotoba" erected in honour of a famous monk by his disciples in the reign of K'ang Hsi. Legend, however, connects it with Ch'ien Lung. The lucky influences (*fêng-shui*) which for centuries assured fame and prosperity for the monastery were said to be embodied in the hill behind this "sotoba"—the hill that shelters the whole establishment, and is supposed to resemble a crouching lion. Now, too much luck—for others—always frightened the masterful monarch who feared that Heaven might be assisting a rival to his throne. The powerful lion therefore looked dangerous to him. So he is supposed to have erected the "sotoba" on the spot where the necromancers said it would rob the king of beasts of his powers for evil, and break the spell of his shadow falling upon the travelling-palace. The ruse was successful in averting bad influences from the Manchu House, but, ever since the monument was completed, the records of the monastery show a steady decline, and the abbot does not dissimulate his resentment in telling this story, which he firmly believes, against a potentate who put an end to the golden days

of the community. Very little would have been left of the monastery now if it had not been repaired at the expense of a rich Chinese businessman recently.

It is worth while stopping over for several days at Ta Chüeh Ssü in order to visit some of the interesting places in its neighbourhood. Like a swallow's nest clinging to the high hill above is the delicious little temple of Hsiao Chai Ssü, lacking only the advantages of a water supply. Not far away is the magnificent tomb prepared for Prince Ch'un, father of the deposed Emperor Hsüan T'ung. On a picturesque cliff to the west of Ta Chüeh Ssü stands a small temple dedicated to Kuan Ti. In former days this temple was restored by the pious efforts of an old lady named Wang who collected the sums necessary for repairs by selling lanterns and incense year after year to the pilgrims. Having achieved her aim, she settled down here, enjoying a well earned rest and a fragrant reputation for sanctity. Her tomb may be seen on the road near the temple, bearing the inscription of "Wang Nai Nai," or "Grandmother Wang," and she is known as the patroness of pilgrims.

Continuing in the same direction along a mountain path, we pass a hill-slope thickly dotted with Buddhist "sotobas"—the tombs of men who were famous churchmen in their day. This locality is called the Hsi Fêng Ssü after a temple that once stood there. The ground belongs to the Lien Hua Ssü and is consecrated as a burial place of holy monks and high dignitaries of the Buddhist church, to whatever sect they may belong.

Over one of these graves stands a solitary tower ornamented with bas-reliefs. The name of this tower is the Ta Kung (or Hsüan T'ung Pao T'a) which means "Great Work." In the same year that the Ming Tombs were begun, so runs the legend, a vast edifice was also commenced on the site of the Ta Kung, so large indeed that when Yung Loh's tomb and its approaches were completed (with all the expenditure of time and labour involved) the Ta Kung was only half-built, whereupon the "great work" was abandoned. It is difficult to believe, however large and important the surroundings of this tower may have been, that they could ever have compared in size or impressiveness with the Ming mausolea. Is the legend then a pure fairy tale, built on foundations of airy fancy? No, because we are assured that the larger and far more difficult part of the project connected with the tower was subterranean. Neighbouring villagers say with reverence and awe that the tower stands over a vast vault, containing elaborate temples, altars and decorations. The entrance to this vault may still be seen choked with brambles, but no man has for many years ventured in, for fear of the occult influences known to protect the place.

Above the Ta Kung there is another tower, standing out sharply against the sky on the crest of the ridge which runs along behind Ta Chüeh Ssü. Access to it is steep and difficult along the narrow road which leads past it to the monastery of Yen Chin Ssü on the other slope of the mountains. The name of this pagoda means

"Tower of the Sixth Wolf" (Liu Lang T'a), and carries us back to remote times—A.D. 1000—when it was erected by the sixth son of the celebrated Yang Chi Yeh, the opponent of the Liao Empress who built the temple on the Po Wang Shan. All the sons of the old warrior were distinguished by a valour equal to, if not surpassing his own, and the sixth was especially prominent, controlling at one time the surroundings of Peking. This tower is said to have been erected by him as an outpost from which he could review the movements of his troops.

Another delightful excursion from Ta Chüeh Ssü, about an hour's walk, is to the hill called Ch'eng Tzū Shan, capped by an old Taoist temple, the Tung Yüeh Miao. Nothing could be more romantic than this solitary shrine standing alone on a cleared space on top of the mountain. A curious story is connected with the founding of it. In the Ming period a man appeared in the neighbourhood, acting as though prompted by some secret vow. This man, whose name is actually on record, chose the site of the temple on the top of this peak, and not only prepared the materials for it, but is said to have carried them up the hill and to have alone erected the shrine. Admiring not only his piety, but his energy also, we follow in his footsteps up the steep path to the summit, where a flight of stone steps all aslope and broken leads to two neglected courtyards. The buildings are deserted save for one day in the year, when an incense burning service is still held in what remains of them by the villagers of the

vicinity. We pity the gods who have lost their noses and whose legs have been amputated at the knees. "Verily foxes have their holes, and the fowls of the air have their places of rest, but the gods no longer have shelter over their heads." Time is not always kind to gods—or men. Nature alone resists his ravages, and here, where all else is falling to ruin, the view remains ever fresh, framed in that branch of overhanging pine that curves gracefully like a bent arm. A long spur of mountains, stencilled against the sky, glows rose-coloured when the sun is near its setting, or shows a dark cluster of purple pyramids under the rising moon. They remind one of the best landscapes of the old Chinese artists who render their broken magnificence with swift sure brush strokes.

Quite close to the foot of Ch'eng Tzū Shan is the charming property of Prince T'ung, a well-known amateur actor. Such a country seat is rare in the neighbourhood of Peking. Its grounds are full of the peculiar phantasies of Chinese gardens, twisted trees and stones whose shapes are unknown in the West. Its pretty terrace overhangs the plain and keeps a friendly watch over the villages.

The road back to Peking lies round the base of a low hill, with an inscription cut in the rock, to the Ming Taoist temple of Wen Ch'üan Ssü, famous for its sulphur springs. These waters cure rheumatism and gout, and the Emperor K'ang Hsi in 1700 had the springs enclosed with stones forming basins for bathing. Modern physi-

cians have re-discovered them, so to speak, and a small sanitarium with bath-houses has been built here. A rustic festival in honour of the Niang Niang Poussa takes place here in May. Theatricals are performed in the open pavilion half way up the hill, and even a village troupe of mummers, with soiled and tawdry costumes, makes a picturesque effect in such a setting. At other times the temple has little of interest except a few dusty Taoist effigies tucked away in dim shrines. Peering into the semi-darkness we notice Chung-li Ch'üan, eldest and holiest of the Eight Great Teachers, a figure universally revered throughout China, and the story of how he became a monk comes to mind.

Chung-li was a mighty warrior in olden days. For 20 years he fought many battles, only at last to become the victim of the emperor's suspicions deliberately aroused by jealous enemies at Court. His family was exterminated and his property confiscated. In course of time the emperor's doubts of his loyalty were dispelled, and, on the return of the valiant general from a successful campaign, the sovereign went to meet him at a great distance to explain the mistake, bidding his empress personally serve his guest. Impressed by her unusual beauty, Chung-li on reaching his home was overtaken by a longing that became an illness. As he lay weak and sorrowing unspeakably, he implored the empress to come to see him, whereupon he declared his consuming passion. While gently ministering to the sick man's needs she asked him of what material was the beaker

from which she poured wine for him at the Court, and he answered truly, "gold." "And of what material was the beaker from which I poured your wine in your own palace?" she inquired. And again he answered truly, "silver." Then one last question she put to him. "Was not the wine equally good no matter what the vessel?" The warrior grasped the secret meaning of her words. His oppression suddenly vanished and, bidding farewell to the empress, he rose from his couch, left his home and entered the "Holy Way."

The road beyond Wen Ch'üan to the east leads through the "Three *Li* Village" (or Pai Chia T'an), so called because its single street of thatched dwellings straggles along for a mile (three *li*). Originally this village boasted one of the oldest temples in the neighbourhood of Peking, K'ai Yuan Ssü, founded in the K'ai Yuan reign of the T'ang dynasty, about A.D. 700. It fell into disrepair, but was rebuilt in the reign of Yung Loh by a monk from Ta Chüeh Ssü, one of those princes of the Buddhist faith who liked to come to this place "to enjoy the mild air, the good water and the sight of the peaceful fields." Nothing now remains of this historic site but a few stone slabs. P'ai Chia T'an's claim to interest at present lies in the peaceful memorial temple erected to Yung Cheng's brother, Prince Yi, whose bounty is gratefully remembered by the descendants of his tenants in the neighbourhood. In the rear courtyards are four splendid white pines, which might well have inspired Po Chü-yi's lovely verses "The Pine Trees in the

Courtyard'':—

. . . Below the hall
The pine trees grow in front of the steps . . .
And no one knows who planted them.
Morning and evening they are visited by the sun and moon;
Rain or fine—they are free from dust and mud.
In the gales of autumn they whisper a vague tune :
From the suns of summer they yield a cool shade.
At the height of spring the fine evening rain
Fills their leaves with a load of hanging pearls.
At the year's end, the time of great snow
Stamps their branches with a fret of glittering jade.
Of the Four Seasons each has his own mood.
Among all the trees none is like the other."
(*More translations from the Chinese, by Arthur Waley.*)

Just beyond the village is the striking landmark of Lone Pine Tree Hill, which the Chinese call Chih Chu Shan, or "Spider Hill," because it resembles a crouching spider with his feet drawn up under him. Once upon a time there lived in this locality two dragons—one on either side of the hill—the White Dragon at the tiny hidden temple of Pai Chia Shui in the Pai Chia T'an ravine, and the Black Dragon at Hei Lung T'an. Now the sound of this hill's name and its position between the two dragons recalls the well-known Chinese emblem "Erh lung Hsi chu," or "the two dragons playing with the pearl"—an emblem reserved for the emperor and used in decorations on the palaces, etc. Popular tradition, which always weaves affectionate legends round the name of the great Ch'ien Lung, says that this monarch was

much struck by the situation of this hill and these coincidences. "Surely," said he, "this is an omen of great importance, and a dragon emperor must sooner or later appear at this spot." This would mean, of course, the overthrow of Ch'ien Lung's dynasty, and the establishment of a new line of monarchs. So he decided to ward off the peril and dispel the insuspicious "*fêng-shui*," or occult influence ruling Chih Chu Shan. This was done by cutting the hill into halves by a gully through which a road now runs. The emperor attained his object, but the wounded hill still bears one witness of its mortification and sorrow in the old and lonely pine that crowns the summit. When cut, the roots are still said to shed a few drops of blood.

Chih Chu Shan guides us to Hei Lung T'an whose golden roofs catch and reflect the sunlight like burnished mirrors from the crest of the Hua Mei Shan ("Painted Eyebrows," or "Flowering Eyebrows," Hill). Some say this hillock with its wide views of mountain and plain takes its name from the flowering eye-browed thrushes¹⁹⁷ that haunt its trees—others—that under the Chin dynasty the black stone found upon it was used by ladies of the Court for painting their eyebrows. In any case Ch'eng Hua, the Ming Emperor, made a clever choice when he built upon this site in 1486.

¹⁹⁷ This particular kind of thrush, much esteemed by the Chinese, is so-called from the feathery growth over the eyes which does indeed resemble flower petals.

Our chair-bearers intone a rhythmical chant as we approach the temple, a parody of an old Han dynasty poem :—

“When the dragon comes, ah !
 The wind stirs and sighs,
 Paper money thrown, ah !
 Silk umbrellas waved.
 When the dragon goes, ah !
 The wind also is still.
 Incense fire dies, ah !
 The cups and vessels are cold.”

(Translation by Arthur Waley.)

On entering the temple precincts we go direct to the bubbling spring to find a lovely pool where the dragon lives. Old trees overhang the water in what seems a perilous balance, while below the pool, sleek and shining, waits for the falling wisteria and catalpa blossoms with cat-like patience. No wonder this has been a favourite retreat for centuries—that emperors and courtiers without number have walked in the covered gallery overlooking the jade green water.

Because we are irreverent foreigners, we drink and we bathe in spite of a warning that we may displease the dragon. The water refreshes us in a most extraordinary way, and seeing no signs of the Hei Lung, we venture to doubt his existence. “It is not wise to say such things,” we are rebuked, “lest evil befall. Remember what happened when the Emperor Ch’ien Lung dared to doubt.” We do not remember, for we have never heard, therefore the story is related for our benefit.

Once upon a time His Majesty, on his return from a hunting expedition, spent a day at the temple. When he had rested and partaken of refreshments, he summoned

two of his officials and said to them: "We desire to speak with the Hei Lung. Inform him that such is our pleasure!" The two officials bowed low before him and, hastening to the edge of the pool, addressed the dragon in the following words, each speaking alternately, according to the etiquette of Courts: "It is now our duty to inform you that our Master the Emperor desires to see you." As they finished speaking, a voice issuing from the rock replied: "Inform His Augustness that I shall be waiting to receive him." When the emperor proceeded to the spring, spoke gracious words and leaned down to receive the monster, a small creature no longer than his arm emerged among the silver bubbles saying: "I am he whom thou seekest. What dost thou desire of me?" For a moment the sovereign was surprised. He stared at the dragon in a bewildered way and cried aloud: "How strange! I had expected to see a mighty presence, something to strike awe and fear. But, behold! this is not a dragon—only a little creature of no account." Scarcely had these words left his lips than the little creature disappeared. Then the water of the spring boiled fiercely and a rumbling voice thundered: "Hai, was it anything like this that you expected?" and simultaneously, from beneath the rocks, a mighty claw, five pointed, appeared. It grew and grew until it reached the tree tops, and spread like an evil hand over the emperor and the multitude of dignitaries surrounding him, standing splendid and motionless as images. It grew and grew, till at last it reached the sky, and the

shadow of those dreadful claws, pointed and menacing, fell upon the temple and upon the hill above, and all the bird and insect voices were hushed as in the stillness before a storm. Then the emperor knew how mistaken he had been in judging by appearances, and he bowed down before the dragon with many exclamations of regret, till slowly the claw was withdrawn as the Hei Lung became appeased and the sun shone again. But ever since the spirit of the spring has received the respect which is his due not only from the emperor, but from all the simple people round about. Twice a year the peasants of the neighbourhood pray to him kneeling at the edge of the pool and begging for plentiful water to ensure good harvests. In dry seasons drums beat in his honour in the villages. Listen! we can hear them now. Without understanding, we noticed a drum under an open shed being belaboured as we came along. Then more drums sounded from hamlets invisible, over miles of parching rice-fields, and yet other drums, like echoings, responded.

We begin to envy His Majesty the Dragon King, dwelling forever in that marvellous pool, with two tortoises to serve him, hearing himself implored simultaneously in a hundred villages, inhaling the vapour of a hundred offerings, reading the lips of his faithful worshippers making prayer: "O Mighty Dragon, we have beaten drums, we have lighted fires, yet the land thirsts and the crops fail. Deign out of thy divine pity to give us rain!"

Now a kindly god listens to the prayers of the people. But once this Black Dragon was deaf to their supplications. Then he learned that the power and pleasure even of a god depend upon good behaviour. And the man who taught him this lesson was none other than Ch'ien Lung again.

During his reign a terrible drought occurred. The sovereign deeply grieved for the thirsty land, journeyed to Hei Lung T'an to make offerings. But the dragon remained deaf to his entreaties. Then the emperor, in righteous wrath, presented him with an ultimatum in his capacity as Supreme Dragon Sovereign. Either rain should be sent, or the image of the Hei Lung spirit should be banished from the temple to the bitter cold regions of the Hei Lung Kiang (the Amur) in the far north. When the god still defied him, Ch'ien Lung started to the city carrying the image. But no sooner had the procession reached the first village beyond the temple than the Dragon of the Pool bethought himself of his cool water, and his votive offerings, of all the things a deity is pleased to hear and rejoiced to see. And he commanded rain to fall, such bounteous rain as had never before been known. So Ch'ien Lung escorted the image back again, and ever since the Black Dragon has lived in his lovely pool doing his duty, and subjected to no greater inconvenience than the swimming of an occasional irreverent foreigner in his crystal clear water.

In token of his repentance Ch'ien Lung ordered yellow tiles made for the roofs of the temple and com-

manded a painter to record the incident in a series of frescoes. These may still be seen in the highest shrine on the hilltop where, in spite of certain crudities of perspective, the spirited drawing and powerful colouring produce an excellent effect. Two Ming tablets and two of the Ch'ing dynasty beside this shrine record successful prayers for rain on other occasions.

On a level with the plain, in a little enclosure quite apart with separate gates leading into it and out of it, to the pool and the temple on the hill (which could be shut off from the priest's quarters entirely when the Emperor was in residence), is the small Imperial pavilion where Ch'ien Lung habitually stayed. It was last occupied by the Emperor Kuang Hsü and the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi who came in 1892 on their farewell trip to the hills. Since then the place has been disfigured by hideous modern reconstructions in the suburban villa style. A gay company of blue birds still makes its home in the grove of bamboos planted beside the door to ward off earthquakes. A brilliant woodpecker has a cache of berries in the eaves. The little pond in the sheltered garden is swarming with insect life, and inoffensive snakes sun themselves undisturbed on the stones. No Chinese would dream of killing them, partly because of the Buddhist prejudice against taking life and partly because serpents are often sent by the dragon king to announce the coming of the gods. Miraculous snakes of this kind exist at Hei Lung T'an and, though their home is on the Hua Mei Shan, they wander freely through

the temple enclosure. Mortals seldom see them. But the old guardian assures us that such heavenly messengers have "the face of an ancient man with white eyebrows and wear upon their head a red mark like a crown."

As we regretfully take leave of Hei Lung T'an and slowly pursue our way through the village beyond the temple, a great bubbling chorus which seems to be the very voice of the soil itself, the chant of the frogs in the rice-fields watered by the dragon's spring, follows us.

Continuing westward for about three miles, we reach the new macadamised road to T'ang Shan just at the corner where the Po Wang Shan (or Wang Erh Shan), the north-eastern peak of the Western Hills, throws its shadow. This "Mountain of a Hundred Views" is easily distinguished miles away by the ruins of the old temple on top. It is a forsaken place—a shrine stricken dead—only the husk of a temple. We guess, and rightly, that it has a poetic history.

In the year A.D. 1000 the Sungs, who at that time reigned over southern China, were at war with the Liaos, rulers of the northern provinces. The Sung politicians no doubt talked of imperialism and the wonderful opening for young men on the rich plains of Chihli. So they sent a mighty army against Yen Ching (Peking). The Liao Empress of the day, the famous Jui Chih—a lady of many lovers—whose name is still popular in the capital, ordered her troops to advance beyond the city and personally took part in the battle which ended in a crushing defeat for the invaders. After the victory she

built the shrine on Po Wang Shan in memory of her six sons, killed before her eyes in the fierce fight she so nobly led.¹⁹⁸

Liaos and Sung have long since disappeared. The Chins defeated them. The Mongols swept over the land. The Mings ousted these northern barbarians. The Manchus waged war and brought the Mings to an ignominious end. But the forlorn ruins of this memorial shrine, symbol of a mother's love and sacrifice, still stand as though challenging the centuries to do their worst, and man to forget the unforgettable.

The road to T'ang Shan strikes out into the plain towards the north. Though monotonous in line, the fields reflect every aspect of the sky and answer every touch of the seasons. Day after day, they shift the slide of changing pictures, like a panorama, now tender in the freshness of spring, now mature in the richness of summer, now subdued and softened into the purple browns of autumn, now white and silent under the winter snows.

At Sha Ho we cross the old road to the Ming Tombs. A fine Ming bridge, adapted to modern traffic, spans the river, and on our right, behind crumbling walls, lies Sha Ch'eng with the ruins of the Ming travelling palace where the emperors broke their journey. Sha Ch'eng (also called P'ing An, "Quiet Spot," on account of the

¹⁹⁸ The son in whose name she was ruling later became, owing to her guidance, the most successful of the Liao monarchs (under the title of Sheng Tsung 983-1031).

legend that the T'ang Emperor T'ai Tsung rested here to recover from a severe indisposition on one of his northern campaigns) was once a busy centre, because all the materials used for the construction of the Ming Tombs were brought here by water and loaded into carts to be taken to the building place.¹⁹⁹

From Sha Ch'eng also, the Mings and the earlier Manchus made their trips to the famous hot springs at T'ang Shan (22 miles from Peking) under the lee of a stone-freckled hill with the picturesque ruins of three old temples silhouetted against the sky-line. K'ang Hsi was especially fond of the place, and to him are due the open-air tanks enclosed in marble, each about the size of a tennis court. The legend why this pretty spot with its health-giving baths was abandoned, is worth the telling.

The later monarchs of the Ch'ing dynasty, grown superstitious in their decadence, got the habit of consult-

¹⁹⁹ The modern traveller is struck by the grandiloquent name of "river" when applied to the little streams of the Sha Ho and the Hun Ho. Nowadays, for the greater part of the year, they are simply feeble tickles of water in broad stony beds. Traditions of traffic, however, seem to indicate that they were once important waterways. Very likely the decrease in the volume of water is due to the deforestation of the surrounding hills, which were originally, as is proved by remains of stumps, covered with abundant forests. The few remaining trees owe their preservation to the vicinity of farms, monasteries and dwellings, since the Chinese believe that trees absorb all feverish miasma and dampness, and careless as they usually are of hygienic rules, we find that they take such sanitary precautions as experience has taught them are suitable to their climate. All other trees, not in the vicinity of dwellings, have been ruthlessly cut down to provide wood for buildings and fuel. This deforestation, as the botanists point out, has seriously affected climatic conditions, bringing about in these northern provinces "a progressive dessication and the gradual encroachment of the sands of the Gobi." To the same cause is undoubtedly due the decrease in the water supply.

ing soothsayers whenever they started on a journey. On one occasion a certain astrologer, doubtless for some hidden reason of his own, informed the sovereign that it was dangerous to pass through Sha Ch'eng and proceed to T'ang Shan because the Imperial Person is assimilated to a dragon. Now "sand," the Chinese word for which is "sha" and the first character in both Sha Ho and Sha Ch'eng, is as detrimental to the dragon as boiling water, "t'ang," the first character in T'ang Shan. He sinks in the first and stews in the second. When this unpleasant assimilation of hieroglyphics was pointed out to them, the pusillanimous successors of K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung withdrew their patronage from T'ang Shan which fell into disrepair.

The ground on which the hot springs stand belongs to the Manchu house, however, to this day and has been rented for \$800 a year to the T'ang Shan Improvement Company of which the ex-Minister of Finance, Tsao Ju-ling, is the leading spirit. It is to him and to other members like Lu Tsung-yü, Sun Pao-ch'i and Chin Yun-pêng that the new gingerbread bungalows erected in the old park belong. A new hotel (foreign style) with excellent baths attracts the traveller especially in late autumn when T'ang Shan is at its best, being one of the few trips outside Peking suitable just before the period of great cold sets in. Moreover, it is a convenient centre for several pleasant excursions.

There are several picturesque old tombs in the neighbourhood. That of Ch'eng Pei-leh, father of the present

Prince Kung, is well kept and handsome, though not to be compared with the magnificent mausoleum of the famous Prince Kung, situated a little farther north at the foot of the hills that gird the horizon to the north and protect T'ang Shan from the cold winter winds. Sixth son of the Emperor Tao Kuang, he has a sepulchre resembling in size and grandeur the Imperial tombs at the Hsi Ling, with the difference that the roof-tiles are green instead of yellow.

The ruined temple and weather-worn pagoda of Lung Ch'üan Ssü—the "Dragon Spring Temple," dating from the tenth century A.D.—is also worth a visit. Little remains of the buildings, save one pavilion under whose floor a spring is hidden. The guardian assures visitors that a golden tea-pot, "large enough to serve nine persons," is buried at the source of the water, and a golden mule is entombed in the hill above the temple, though what their connection is, if any, he cannot say. No one has seen these wonderful things, safeguarded by a taboo of sanctity. But the silver spring with its large bubbles, that come sailing majestically up from the little pool and explode quietly in the air, and the swaying water-weeds that seem to have solved the problem of perpetual motion, and the dragon-flies chasing to and fro intent on murder—these are real treasures that all may enjoy.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GREAT WALL AND THE MING TOMBS.

THE classical excursion from Peking which no tourist should omit, even if only in the capital for a few days, is to the Great Wall at the Nankou Pass. There are many other places where this impressive barrier—the only work of man's hands supposed to be visible from Mars—may be seen, as it stretches for nearly 2,000 miles from the sea coast at Shanhaikuan to the borders of Thibet. But nowhere is the ancient fortification in better preservation, nowhere grander. And Nankou has the advantage of being easily accessible (about 25 miles or one and a half hours by train on the Peking-Kalgan line) with clean and sufficiently comfortable hotels.

From Peking, the trip to the Wall and back can be done in one day. Including the excursion to the Ming Tombs, it can be hurried through in forty-eight hours, by spending a night at the foot of the Pass. But those who have the time will not regret giving two whole days to the expedition and an extra afternoon to wandering in Nankou itself.

This quaint old walled town is the first link in the chain of defences built across the narrow defile beyond to keep back the Tartars. It used also to be, and still remains to some extent, an important stage on the caravan route to Mongolia. A short distance above the

town, the hills gather in and we come to the entrance of the gorge guarded by four watch towers. This is the spot where, according to Chinese poets, the visitor should muse at sunset, "when the light falling upon the kingfisher coloured rocks" is one of the eight sights of the neighbourhood.²⁰⁰ Only the brush of a very great artist could reproduce the scene: the narrow entrance to the wild and rugged Pass, water and wind-worn, lying in darkness as if blotted out with ink; the crests of its grim walls slowly turning from flame to sapphire, then to intensest violet—the foreground tinted with delicate purples and blues.

The journey to the Wall at the top of the Pass may be made by train. How prosaic, the stranger exclaims, to view such a renowned sight from a car window! But the railway line itself is extraordinarily interesting. All credit to the Chinese engineer who overcame enormous difficulties in building it—as the steep gradients, the numerous tunnels (one of which goes actually under the Great Wall) and the elaborate stone revetment work, prove.

As the engine slowly puffs up the narrow valley, the steep, bare hills rise higher. We leave behind us the last little farms, so stony that it seems impossible for industry to wrest a living from such poor soil. Walls curving down into the cañon and watch towers standing straight like sentinels give a picturesque sky-line to mountain profiles. Scarred with the traces of many battles between the

²⁰⁰ Chapter XIII, concluding footnote.



SPUR OF THE GREAT WALL.

Chinese and the nomads, these subsidiary defences of the Pass, which now seem so purposeless and disconnected, send fancy roaming back to the days when they were vitally important in keeping out the ancestors of the Turks, the Huns, the Khitans, the Nüchens, the Mongols and other barbarians who tried to fight their way into the coveted fertile plains of North China.

The Nankou Pass has been compared to the Khyber, the town itself to Jamrud, the midway fort of Chü Yung Kuan to Ali Musjid; and in its wilder parts this Gateway into China does remind one of the Gateway into India. Though scenically less magnificent, the former is historically a counterpart of the latter. Through one Genghis Khan and his hordes found their way to the rich Middle Kingdom, and through the other Greeks, Persians, Afghans and Mongols poured down into the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges.

After an hour's climbing the train stops at the little station of Ch'ing Lung Ch'iao ("Bright Dragon Bridge"). Thence it is an easy walk of half an hour along the old highway to the Pa Ta Ling gate at the top of the pass (2,000 feet above sea level). The Great Wall crosses the latter squarely here, and through the massive archway, from which the studded iron gates have disappeared now, we get a magnificent view of the plains of Chihli and of the snow-capped mountains in the distance.

On either side, the Wall wanders along the crests of the hills, scaling peaks which it seems impossible even the foot of man could climb. The massive loops of historic

masonry classed, and rightly, by the ancients as one of the wonders of the world, are doubly impressive in these mountain solitudes. Not a soul is to be seen save our donkey driver who has tied his beast to the old cannon lying in the grass (the last of the treasures of antique weapons and armour which were discovered in one of the towers and most of which were removed by German sightseers)—and a shepherd who has come up from his village in search of pasturage. He sits watching his flock scrambling among the broken bricks—a pretty sight! The mothers are followed by the little dancing, elf-like kids while the bearded patriarchs, who love to clamber to the most inaccessible heights, stand embossed against the clear sky in triumph and quietude. The stillness is broken only by the occasional whistle of a train softened by distance, or the shrill cry of a hawk pursued by a high-hovering eagle.

To get the prospect in the fulness of its noble grandeur, one must climb the wall to the highest tower on the eastern spur. So steep is this section that the *terre-plein* takes the form of steps of square brick flags, very laborious to mount. But from the casemated embrasures of this huge stone sentry box, 28 other block-houses, each a third of a mile from its neighbour, are visible, and whichever way we turn the Wall itself seems to pursue us, writhing like a mighty dragon as far as the eye can reach.

Was it from this same tower that the Chinese philosopher, meditating in the cool of the evening, climbed the

silver ladder of a moonbeam to the moon? The legend, one of the many that have clung to the Wall, like mosses accumulated through the patient years, says so. Of course, he had amazing experiences when he got to the lunar sphere. First he traversed a succession of glittering halls. Then he came to one lovelier than all the rest and found an old man sitting at a table engrossed in a big book, the "Book of Predestined Marriages." Since all marriages in China are supposed to be made in Heaven, the old man was exceedingly busy, but with proper courtesy he offered to stop his work and accompany the earth-stranger through the fairy palaces of the moon. They were built all of silver and mother-of-pearl and precious jewels adorned them. "High above clouds and rain they stood, high, too, above the winds of sorrow and the chill of death. And they were filled with beautiful women whose robes became them as the petals become the flowers, weaving the patterns of the stars at golden looms."

The sage marvelled greatly at what he saw, but the magical atmosphere was too rare and fine for a mortal to linger in. Just before dawn, therefore, he bade adieu to the venerable ancient, thanked him for his kindly entertainment and descended the moonbeam again. When he reached the earth, he told those he met of the wonders he had seen, but they only laughed at him. "If it were true that you had found a country high above clouds and rain, where the winds of sorrow never blow, neither the chill of death touches the land, why did you

return?" they asked. The sage could not answer their question because he did not quite know himself, so all the people mocked him—all but one wise elder who, divining the unspoken reason, explained: "The sage was drawn back by the remembrance of familiar things, for dearer even than perfection is that to which the heart is accustomed."

On this imposing height we linger, bidding imagination repeople the lines of ruined towers with the defenders of bygone ages. Our minds play cinematograph and give us a moving picture of the history of the mighty rampart in which the Chinese passion for wall construction, manifest to anyone who has been in the country even a few days, finds its grandest expression.

Two centuries before the Christian era Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, contemporary of Hannibal, conceived this giant scheme for keeping the Tartars in their place.²⁰¹ For such portions of the wall as this emperor caused to be built, linking together and extending some previously existing ramparts, he employed 700,000 criminals and prisoners of war. The difficulties at one time seemed so insurmountable that Ch'in Shih Huang Ti consulted a soothsayer. "Never until 10,000 men are buried beneath this wall," he

²⁰¹ It is interesting to note that in still more remote ages, according to Chinese historians, the northern peasants used to plough their fields perpendicularly to the line of foreign invasion, that is to say from east to west. This was a serious deterrent to armies bent on conquest, and requiring carts for transport. The habit still prevails in many districts. In other places rows of willows were planted to check the advance of cavalry: this is the origin of the well-known "Willow Fence," which used to be a prolongation of the Great Wall into Manchuria.

replied, "will it be successfully completed." Now even so great an autocrat hesitated to entomb 10,000 of his subjects alive for the furtherance of his scheme. So he effected a compromise with the Supernatural Powers by burying one man whose name contained the character "Ten Thousand," and thereafter the work proceeded smoothly.

With a thrill of disappointment, we learn that this wall which bars the Nankou Pass is not the original one built by Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, but merely the Inner Great Wall, a comparatively modern work begun as an earth rampart in A.D. 555 by the Northern Ch'i dynasty.²⁰²

Other sovereigns of other dynasties carried on or repaired the work of Ch'in Shih Huang Ti. There is a record, for instance, of a Chin monarch who built a section of the wall in ten days by the employment of no less than a million men, numbers of whom died from the results of forced labour. Again there were periods when nothing was done and the barrier fell into disuse. Under the Mongols, who themselves came from beyond it, the Wall, not being required for defence, was left unrepaired and seems to have excited little interest, as Marco Polo never even mentions it.²⁰³ But once the Mings ousted

²⁰² The wall at Nankou is the innermost of five great loops, of which two are still wholly traceable, one being the wall which passes through Kalgan. The three outer walls, of which history says little, are now mere hummocks.

²⁰³ For a detailed history of the Wall throughout its entire length see *The Great Wall of China*, by William Edgar Geil.

the Tartars, the Great Wall again assumed importance, and the new dynasty in the fifteenth century rebuilt in granite and brick this loop defending the Nankou Pass, as an obstacle against their northern enemies.

As a matter of fact during the 2,000 years of the huge racial movements which devastated Asia and even troubled Europe from time to time, China was overwhelmed again and again in spite of the Wall. Still, as a rampart against petty raids, it was often valuable and the moral effect on a would-be conqueror must have been tremendous. To invade a country guarded by such a barrier, especially with cavalry, required a stout heart and stupendous preparation. Moreover there was little hope of slipping through by surprise, as the watch towers in important passes were only a hundred yards apart, and even in remote districts, free from the chronic raids of the nomads, never more than a mile from one another. All of them were manned by small garrisons who had an excellent signal system of beacons by means of which messages could be transmitted from tower to tower for thousands of miles in a remarkably short time.²⁰⁴ By this means an attack on the Wall at some remote point could be flashed to Peking in a night, and all the resources of large armies summoned to keep pace with the movements of the barbarians reconnoitring along the outside of the barrier in search of a weak spot.

²⁰⁴Such was the object of the numerous Ming watch towers scattered over the Peking plain and accessible, like the Turkish "*kulehs*," only by ladders from the outside.

Now that the Tartar menace has long since disappeared, the mighty rampart is useless, and there is not so much as a corporal's guard for hundreds of miles, although the "mouths" of the Wall at Kalgan (Chang Chia K'ou), Ku Pei K'ou,²⁰⁵ and other places are still strictly watched and closed at sundown every evening, chiefly, be it noted, to protect the cities near them. Gone are all those doughty warriors who stood against Genghis Khan; rusty their arms, which antiquarians dig out of the towers; crumbling the towers themselves. Even the Wall in places is slipping down into the valleys, stone by stone, and the waterspouts, cleverly placed on the inside of the barrier that thirst might add to the difficulties of the invaders, have fallen among the brambles. But at least the strength and glory of the mighty fortification is yielding before no human foe. Only time, the most powerful and invincible enemy, can bring to ruin what no mortal conqueror could destroy.

If you go to the Wall by train, be sure to come back by road down the Pass, then you will get a true impression of the old life of the borderland, and understand the full significance of the barrier itself. The journey takes about four hours and must be done by donkey, on foot or in a chair. A sharp turn from the top of the defile and we enter the T'an Ch'in Hsia or "Playing Harp Gorge" where a little stream makes perpetual music. None can tread the stones of this

²⁰⁵ "K'ou" is a Chinese word meaning "mouth."

highway without a feeling that he has stepped back several centuries, and as old as the road itself (which for over 2,000 years has been the chief artery of intercourse, commercial as well as martial, between the Chinese and the peoples of the North) are the means of travel, the conveyances, the trappings of the animals. There are the same long strings of soft-footed camels, with the klang-i-klang of bells, that carried freight to Kublai Khan; the same passing herds of sheep "coming in from Tartary"; the same donkey caravans laden with coal; the same droves of shaggy ponies enveloped in a grey dust cloud and driven by quaint Mongols, the same equestrian travellers, sitting short-stirruped on the high accumulation of their baggage. Except for the old garrisons of armoured bowmen and the watchmen patrolling the walls or lighting beacons on the signal towers, we have a perfect picture of the life of the Pass as it was hundreds of years ago.

When the capital was moved north by the Ming emperors, a great deal of commerce which formerly followed the southern routes was diverted to this highway, and the opening of trade with the Russian outposts in Siberia in the seventeenth century added considerably to the camel traffic through the defile. The railway from Kalgan now takes much of this; furs come south, tea goes north and west by other routes. But there still remains a stream of men and beasts up and down the narrow valley—enough at any rate to afford us many picturesque impressions and memories.

Near Chü Yung Kuan we overtake a mountain funeral. The coffin is suspended from poles resting on the backs of mules. Why the cock tied in a basket upon it? On inquiry, we learn that the dead man had been engaged in trading operations in the land of the nomads who live, herd, and think much as their forefathers did in the days of Noah. Every Chinese dislikes to reside, even temporarily, outside the Wall and if he can afford it, invariably provides that, should he die "beyond the Mouth," his body shall be brought back and buried within the pale. Lest the spirit lose its way, therefore, a cock is carried with the corpse, so that morning and evening his crowing may guide the soul to follow the mortal remains.

The fortified village of Chü Yung Kuan was always a purely military outpost and not a trade centre, so that, with the removal of the garrison, it has little life left. Its fortifications remain remarkable monuments to the military genius of the ancients—as substantially built as the Great Wall itself. They turned the Chin Tartars in their time and twice the defenders of Chü Yung Kuan resisted the Mongols, once under the personal leadership of Genghis Khan. Neglect in other quarters, however, cost the people within the Wall an empire, for the great Mongol leader simply chose another pass, carelessly guarded, and appeared upon the plain of Peking while the army at Chü Yung Kuan was still waiting for a second assault. Some say the gateway was built in commemoration of this episode; others that it is simply

a Buddhist monument put up by the Mongolian Khans, great patrons of Lamaism.

Dated 1345, it is constructed of massive blocks of marble deeply carved with Buddhist figures and symbols: on the keystone, a "garuda" bird in bold relief between a pair of Naga kings with seven cobra heads, whose serpentine bodies are lost in rich coils of foliage. Within the 50 foot octagonal passage-way are the four Maharajahs and six inscriptions in six different scripts that have been the subject of much discussion among archæologists.²⁰⁶ The languages are: Chinese, Mongol, written in Bashpa characters,²⁰⁷ Uigur (derived from the Syriac and parent of the modern Mongol and Manchu) Thibetan, Sanscrit, in the Devanagari script, and the rare Tangut. The last-named language is the most interesting, both because few samples of it are left, and because it was so long a riddle to scholars. The inscription, which resembles bacilli under a microscope, is a modified form of Chinese characters. When finally deciphered in 1903 by Morrisse of the French Legation at Peking, it proved to be the alphabet of the Hsi Hsia Kingdom (tenth to thirteenth centuries A.D.), a Thibetan state on the upper Huang Ho. Other inscriptions give the names of the restorers of the archway in 1445, and a

²⁰⁶ These inscriptions have been published at Paris by Prince Roland Bonaparte in a magnificent album.

²⁰⁷ Bashpa, a Thibetan Lama who was made State Preceptor in A.D. 1260 and recognised by the Khan as supreme head of the Buddhist Church, composed this alphabet, modelled on the Thibetan, for the transliteration of all languages under the sway of Kublai Khan.



THE "LANGUAGE ARCH"—CHÜ YÜN KUAN (NANKOT PASS).

tablet added by the Ch'ings describes Chü Yung Kuan as the "First Fortress of the World."

How often must the northern tribes have poured down this rugged causeway in their unrestricted, rapacious hordes to burn the villages inside the wall, to ransack the towns and steal and kill! And what ghastly struggles must have taken place here before the conquering barbarians defeated the defenders and, pausing only to tie the heads of their vanquished enemies to their saddle bows like garlands bloody and grimacing, rode away into the valleys. But always the "kindly rains came and washed the blood off the stones, and the sun bleached them clean again, and the shy wild green herbs plaited their leaves in garlands to hide the stains and wounds, and the mountains peeped demurely through the gateways with their hints of mists and clouds and vagabond winds and the exquisite astonishments of their tintings—till it seemed as if sorrow and death could never have come that way."

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In striking contrast to the wild and savage mood which Nature shows in the Nankou Pass is the peaceful valley about seven miles to the east, where the Ming Tombs lie.

The site of the Thirteen Tombs of the last purely Chinese dynasty was chosen by the Emperor Yung Loh, who removed the capital of the Empire from Nanking to Peking. He even refused to have his body taken to the former city for burial near his father Hung Wu because

of his personal unpopularity there. From childhood, he showed a powerful and violent character. His father, the founder of the Ming dynasty, of whom Yung Loh was the real consolidator, is said to have had a dream in which he saw a black dragon menacing him from one of the columns of the throne hall. The astrologer consulted on the occasion declined to interpret the dream but advised Hung Wu to observe his own family closely. Then one day, when his 23 sons were playing around him, he noticed that the future emperor Yung Loh, who was least liked by him on account of his intractable disposition and was distinguished by an unusually swarthy complexion, did not join in the game but stood watching him with both arms round a column. The dream immediately recurred to his mind. Not long afterwards, the young prince was sent to the distant province of Yen (Peking) where he feigned madness, presumably to ward off the suspicions his domineering character had created.

When Hung Wu, to maintain the principle of primogeniture which he wished to establish, left the throne to the eldest son of his eldest son (already dead), the appointed heir found more than his match when he attempted to forestall his uncle's jealousies. In a difficult campaign the latter vanquished his armies and took Nanking, whence the defeated claimant fled to become what Hung Wu had started as—a monk.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ See Chapter XII—legend of the T'ieh T'a.

Yung Loh's advent to the throne was marked by the most atrocious cruelties against the followers of his nephew. Legend says that one man who dared protest was beheaded in Yung Loh's presence, and the blood gushing from his neck formed the character for "traitor" in the sand. Another who refused to "k'o-tow" to him was placed in a vat of boiling oil, but even in his death-agonies he turned his back on the Emperor. A third was skinned alive and his empty skin suspended by a nail from one of the gates of Nanking. Whilst Yung Loh was riding through the gate on a windy day, the dry skin, like a clown's bladder, blew down and slapped him smartly on the face, whereupon the bystanders laughed. This disagreeable incident was the straw which decided the monarch to leave Nanking where he was so hated and where he had so many unpleasant remembrances. His subsequent career proved him a great ruler. His military expeditions not only united China, but brought Mongolia and Indo-China under his sway. The death of Tamerlane spared him the test of an encounter with the Terrible Lamé One, but Chinese fleets meanwhile dominated the South Sea and the Indian Ocean. The pandects and the great encyclopædia, bearing Yung Loh's name, the literary and artistic works dating from his reign, complete the glorious record he has left to posterity. (*See Chapter I*).

. . .

When laying out the tombs for himself and his posterity, Yung Loh followed the general plan of Imperial

graves which had remained unchanged since the abandonment of the primitive earth pyramid such as mark the burial grounds of the Chou and Han sovereigns. The T'angs and the Sung had their triumphant approaches with attendant figures, their tablet-temples where their shades were worshipped, their evergreen groves, their tower-sheltered vaults cut into the slopes of the hills. He had his—only bigger and finer. In fact before the dethronement of the dynasty, the tombs of the Ming emperors undoubtedly formed one of the largest and most gorgeous royal cemeteries ever laid out by the hand of man. They yield the palm to the Pyramids of Egypt in point of bulk, but certainly not in that of style or grandeur.

One common approach, designated in the Annals as "The Spirit's Road for the Combined Mausolea,"²⁰⁹ serves for all the tombs which are dotted about the valley, not in chronological order but wherever each emperor found a site suited to his horoscope. It begins with a magnificent five-arched marble *p'ai lou* (erected A.D. 1541), the finest in China, through whose openings we get a general view along the whole avenue with the brown hills flanking the vale of the dead. In the foreground, a human touch is given by the bronzed

²⁰⁹ Before the overthrow of the Mings, this "Road of the Spirit" was even more impressive than now, because it was lined with stately evergreens. The Tablet House stood in the midst of a park. But notwithstanding orders given by the first Manchu emperors to safeguard the Ming Tombs, the country people cut the trees for fuel and timber as soon as they could do so unpunished.

farmer leading two grey donkeys with panniers full of persimmons—splashes of golden red and orange, "richer and riper than the golden apples of the fabled Hesperides."

Were we back in Ming days, we should be forced to dismount at the "Great Red Gate" ("Ta Hung Mên," a feature of all Imperial necropoli in China) like the retainers who accompanied funeral or sacrificial cortèges. Now we may, if we choose, commit the sacrilege of riding up to the second pavilion called the "Tablet House" where stands the huge stone monolith on the largest stone tortoise in North China, erected by the Emperor Jen Tsung in memory of his father (1425), inscribed by Ch'ien Lung with "30 elegies" in honour of the Ming sovereigns, and guarded by four "Pillars of Victory" with sculptured clouds, classically called the "Columns Bearing the Sky."

Here we enter upon the "Triumphal Way," two-thirds of a mile long, paved throughout its length and lined with 18 pairs of statues of men and animals (1436): two sitting lions, two standing lions, two unicorns rampant and two couchant, two camels kneeling and two standing, four "ch'i lin" (mythical monsters), four horses, four elephants, four civil officials in full robes, four military officials in armour and four "patriotic officials" bearing tablets.

The stately warriors in their sober suits of grey stone are impressive. We guess what potent and valiant men they were from the sternness of their faces. But, of

course, everything about them is antiquated and useless, from their fantastic helmets to their ponderous boots that are far too heavy to advance in, or reconnoitre in, or do any of those complicated things modern soldiers have to do. They went out of fashion, so far as practical utility goes, with the days when war was not a matter of agility, but of weight. Yet something of their wild, harsh age—the age of tyrants—still clings about them, and to see them standing there steadfastly guarding the master they served, reminds us of the old saying: “By day shineth the sun, by night shineth the moon—shineth also the warrior in harness of war.”

“To their divinely descended lord, faithful retainers such as they when alive owed everything, in fact not less than in theory: goods, household, liberty, life itself. Any or all of these they were expected to yield up without a murmur for the sake of that lord. And duty to him, like duty to the family ancestors, did not cease with death.” The spirit of the master must continue to be worshipfully served by those who in life owed him direct obedience, and it could not be permitted to enter unattended into the World of Shadows. Some at least who served him living were bound to follow him in death. Thus in early times arose the custom of human sacrifices, at first obligatory, afterwards voluntary. But finally it is recorded that one compassionate emperor said: “It is a very painful thing to force or even permit those whom one has loved in life to follow one in death. Though it be an ancient custom, why continue it if it is bad?”

From this time forward the suggestion of a court noble, evidently an interested party, that stone images of men and animals be substituted for human sacrifices and set up at the entrance of the tomb (like the clay figurines in the actual grave chamber) for the glory of the departed soul, was approved.

Beyond the last pair of images, the road passes through the triple "Dragon and Phoenix Gate." From this point we can distinguish most of the 13 tombs in their amphitheatre of hills, with the dominating sepulchre of Yung Loh, the Ch'ang Ling, standing out more distinctly than all the rest.

Then the avenue crosses several ruined bridges over mountain torrent beds, dry except in the rainy season, and gently climbs the slope of the hill. Amid such ideally "auspicious conditions" (*fêng-shui*) the soul of Yung Loh reposes, and his body lies in a mausoleum more beautiful than any in all the length and breadth of the land.

Three porticoes stand at the entrance to his tomb opening into an outer courtyard with twisted trees. A second triple gate opens into a second court with commemorative stelæ and tiled furnaces. The impression culminates in the great sacrificial hall where the rites of ancestral worship have been performed in his honour, not only by his own descendants but by those who dispossessed him, the Manchu sovereigns Shun Chih and K'ang Hsi.

Mark well the majestic aspect of this hall, the largest building in China full of a grand quietness and reserve. It is worthy of study for the sake of its monumental proportions. Three flights of marble steps lead to the terrace on which it stands, three massive portals with folding doors of tracery open into the one vast chamber, 70 yards long by 30 deep—longer than the transept of Westminster Abbey, and about half the length and breadth of Cologne Cathedral. 40 pillars shaped from tree trunks (*Persea Nan-mu*),²¹⁰ each more than a yard in diameter and 60 feet high, support the true roof under which there is a lower ceiling about 35 feet from the floor. All the magnificence of the empty temple—empty save for a simple wooden table for offerings and the stand for the spirit tablet—is in these columns brightened with vermilion and gold, and sound after nearly 500 years of service, in the heavy cross beams of the roof that they so fittingly uphold, and the ceiling geometrically divided into sunken panels, each worked in relief and lacquered with dragons.

But the tomb itself is not here. It lies beyond the temple and above it. We cross still another court behind, planted, like the preceding, with arbor vitæ trees and large-leafed oaks, to the graceful "Soul Tower" contain-

²¹⁰ "The '*Nan-mu*' (a species of laurel) is the tallest and straightest of Chinese trees; the grain improves with age, and the wood gradually acquires a dead leaf tint while preserving its aromatic qualities, so that these superb columns of Yung Loh's sacrificial temple, which date from the early part of the fifteenth century, still exhale a vague perfume."—*Bushell*.

ing the tablet inscribed with Yung Loh's posthumous title. Thence a vaulted passage 40 yards long leads to the tumulus, the door of which is closed by masonry. A grey stone stairway climbs among the dark trees to the grave terrace overlooking the mound, classically called the "Jewelled Citadel" or "City of Precious Relics"—an artificial hill more than half a mile in circuit planted with sombre pines. Beneath this is the huge domed grave chamber where Yung Loh's coffin, richly lacquered and inscribed with Buddhist "sutras," reposes upon its "jewelled bedstead" amid rich treasures of precious stones and metals, recklessly piled. Magnificent and elaborate as the tomb buildings are, it is the vault (and remember this is the finest specimen of an Imperial vault in China) upon which most money and labour are expended. The ceiling and sides are lined with blocks of stone so nicely fitted together that not a drop of moisture may enter. "There is behind the door inside," says Bourne (*Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 5), "a round hole cut in the stone floor and when the door is shut a large ball of stone follows it and, falling into the hole, by its projecting top prevents the door from ever opening again. Nor could it be opened except by the application of sufficient force to smash it to pieces. When this door has been shut, the deceased emperor is supposed to be at peace for evermore."²¹¹

²¹¹ For a detailed description of Imperial tombs see *The Religious System of China*, by J. J. M. de Groot.

Stilled is that turbulent spirit now, ended those varied activities which made Yung Loh famous, and we cannot conceive a nobler or more fitting sepulchre for the founder of all that is grand and impressive in Peking. We have so much for which to thank him in the capital he left to China : the wonderful walls he built for it, the palaces he enshrined there, the Temple of Heaven that he called into being ! And looking at his tomb we find ourselves thinking that he has even triumphed in some measure over death, for who shall outwit death but "he who creates beauty too beautiful to die?"

Our reverie is rudely broken by a tattered coolie who inquires if we will buy soda water or lemonade. He keeps a little stall of drinks and cigarettes under the shelter of the outer gate. It reminds us of a buffet at some way-station in Europe—only we miss the familiar advertisements of mineral waters and the pictures of the ships by which you ought to go to America and the hotels at which you ought to stay in Paris. Frankly it jars a little. All the same we buy the lemonade because we feel hot and rather sorry for the coolie who is very poor, since his allowance as caretaker is no longer paid by the poverty-stricken Imperial family. But when he offers to sell us a yellow tile from the roof, we refuse to purchase it, much to his amazement. Would we perhaps prefer one more perfect than those which have already fallen like golden leaves as the grass and weeds have pushed the roofs apart ? If so, a long bamboo is ready to coax one from the eaves. No, certainly not. Let the past

tumble down in peace if tumble down it must, though we shudder at the indifference that suffers it.

The other tombs of the group are so greatly inferior to that of Yung Loh, except for the beauty of their situations, that they are scarcely worth visiting.

These tombs are :—

The Hsien Ling in which Hung Hsi (posthumous title Jen Tsung) was buried in 1426 after a short reign of ten months.

The Ching Ling where Hsüan Têh (Hsüan Tsung) lies, buried in 1435—a fair and moderate monarch whose peaceful and prosperous reign is famous for the casting of bronzes.

The Yü Ling, sepulchre of Cheng T'ung (Ying Tsung), buried in 1465, the sovereign who, after a long eunuch regency, was made prisoner by the Mongols, and on being released found his brother had usurped his throne.²¹² This he regained—only to fall back under the nefarious influences of the beginning of his reign.

The Miao Ling, tomb of Ch'eng Hua (Hsien Tsung), buried in 1488 at the height of the Ming prosperity ; a benefactor of the people, yet not far seeing enough to check the growing power of the palace eunuchs.

The T'ai Ling in which rests Hung Chih (Hsiao Tsung), buried 1506, a kindly monarch of average abilities and indifferent decision.

²¹² See *Mahakala Miao*, Chapter IX. Also Ching T'ai's tomb, Chapter XII.

The K'ang Ling where lies Cheng Têh (Wu Tsung), buried 1522, remembered as a dissolute *bon vivant* who neglected state affairs, yet withal a talented personality, a famous linguist, traveller and huntsman.

The Ying Ling, tomb of Chia Ching (Shih Tsung), buried 1567, the bigoted Taoist, destroyer of Buddhist temples, whose long but unlucky reign was disturbed by Mongol and Japanese raids.

The Chao Ling in which Lung Ch'ing (Mu Tsung), a promising monarch who died young, was buried in 1573.

The Yung Ling where Wan Li (Shen Tsung) lies, buried 1620. This amiable figure occupied the throne for many years during which he saw various desultory wars with the mighty Japanese captain Hideyoshi, besides the dreaded growth of European influence, and the rise of the Manchus. Foreigners chiefly remember him for the famous porcelain made in his time. Historians note the decadence of the dynasty at his death.

The Ch'ing Ling, sepulchre of the kindly T'ai Ch'ang (Kuang Tsung), who died after only a month on the throne (1620), presumably poisoned.

The Têh Ling, tomb of T'ien Ch'i (Hsi Tsung), buried 1628, called "The Unhappy" and chiefly known to fame as an enthusiastic amateur carpenter. He left the real power to the "infamous eunuch" Wei Chung-hsien²¹³ and to his foster-mother, both of whom he blindly trusted,

²¹³ See "Pi Yün Ssü," Chapter XIV.

while he passed his days with saw and axe. How they misused it may be seen by the rapid downfall of the Mings and by the judgment of K'ang Hsi, who rightly placed the blame on this inattentive emperor and had his tablet removed from the Ti Wang Miao (Pantheon).²¹⁴

The Ssü Ling, erected by the Manchu Emperor Shun Chih, where lies Ch'ung Cheng (Huai Tsung), last of his line, buried here in 1659. He made a heroic effort to cleanse his court and government but, in spite of all his ambition and energy, it was too late to undo the harm wrought by his predecessors, as he found to his ultimate despair. He is the emperor who strangled himself on the Coal Hill upon the approach of the rebels that brought about the fall of the dynasty and were indirectly responsible for the coming of the Manchus.²¹⁵

By order of Li Tz'ü-ch'eng, the conqueror, when he entered the palace, two door panels were brought and the emperor's body, together with that of his faithful eunuch attendant, was carried to a shop inside the Tung Hua Mên. "Here the remains lay for three days while the people were allowed to pay their respects, after which eunuchs were ordered to array the late sovereign in Imperial robes and to dress his hair before laying him in his coffin. . . ."

On the third of the fourth moon the emperor and his consort were temporarily buried in the grave of the T'ien

²¹⁴ See Chapter X.

²¹⁵ See Coal Hill, Chapter V and Chapter II.

concubine, but only eunuchs and peasants witnessed the burial. Later, when Li Tz'ü-ch'eng had been defeated and the Manchus had entered Peking, their Regent, Prince Jui,²¹⁶ ordered the building of an Imperial mausoleum and prescribed three days of general mourning. But for the time, the last of the Ming emperors went to his rest unhonoured. . . .²¹⁷

An account of the burial ceremony, which it is interesting to quote for its description of a grave chamber, was subsequently given to the Manchu Regent by the minor official who carried it out under orders from the rebel Prefect of Peking, as follows :—²¹⁷

“Seven days after the capture of Peking, I received orders that we were to inter their Late Majesties in the grave chamber of the late concubine, the Lady T'ien, and that I was to engage labourers whose wages would be paid out of the public funds, to open up the passage leading thereto. I therefore engaged 30 bearers for the Imperial coffin and 16 for that of the empress, and arranged for their conveyance to Ch'ang P'ing Chou. The departmental treasury was quite empty and as the secretary of Li Tz'ü-ch'eng's Board of Ceremonies refused to provide the promised funds, I was obliged to collect subscriptions from charitable persons. Thanks to the generosity of two worthies I obtained the sum of 340 tiao (at that time about £6). So I set to work to open up the

²¹⁶ See *Mahakala Miao*, Chapter IX.

²¹⁷ See *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking*, by Backhouse and Bland.

grave tunnel which was 135 feet long. We toiled three days and three nights before we came to the stone gate opening into the ante-chamber. Inside we found a lofty hall containing sacrificial vessels and many ornaments. In the centre was a stone vessel whereon stood enormous candles of walrus fat (the so-called "Everlasting Lamps.") Next we opened the central tunnel gate and found ourselves within a much larger hall in the centre of which stood a stone couch one foot five inches high and 10 feet broad, and on it lay the coffin of the Lady T'ien, covered with silk drapery.

"The following day the two coffins were borne through the tunnel and into the grave chamber. We offered sacrifice of a bullock, gold and silver paper, grain and fruits. At the head of the few officials present I proceeded to pay homage to our departed sovereign and we all wept bitterly at the door of the Imperial biers. Then we placed the coffins on the stone couch, His Majesty's in the central place, that of the Empress on the left and that of the Lady T'ien on the right. The Lady T'ien's death had occurred at a time of peace and, consequently, her coffin had been provided with the customary outer shell. As there had been no means of preparing one in the present case for His Majesty, I had this shell removed and used to cover that of the emperor. The obsequies being over, we refilled the tunnel, banking up the earth so as to conceal the approach. On the following morning we offered libations of wine, and I had a mound erected over the grave by the peasants of

the neighbourhood, besides building a clay wall five feet high round the enclosure." ²¹⁸

Thus passed the last Ming sovereign from the Dragon Throne and no better epitaph for the dynasty can be found than Boulger's characteristic appreciation :

"When they had driven out the Mongols, the Mings seem to have settled down into an ordinary and intensely national line of rulers. . . . The Chinese acquiesced in their rule and even showed that they possessed for it a special regard and affection." Yet with the single exception of Yung Loh, "the successors of Hung Wu did nothing great or noteworthy." Of many of these sovereigns we may say that their tombs are more noble than their lives.

²¹⁸ Outside the gate of this temporary tomb, the faithful eunuch who followed the emperor to death was buried in his immediate vicinity.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HSI LING AND THE TUNG LING.

BESIDES the Ming Tombs there are in the neighbourhood of the capital two other Imperial burial places, rivals in the beauty of their situation and the lavish extravagance of their architecture—the Hsi Ling, or Western Tombs, where some of the Manchu emperors are buried, and the Tung Ling, or Eastern Tombs, where the remainder of the Ch'ings, save only the first two who lie at Mukden, have found their last rest. Both are more inaccessible than the Ming Mausolea, therefore less known to foreigners. But the Hsi Ling, at least, is not a very long nor a very difficult excursion.²¹⁹

The first stage, as far as Kao Pei Tien (84 kilometres) may be done on the Peking-Hankow Railway. Near Liang Hsiang Hsien, as we look out of the car window, our attention is attracted by a pagoda, the Ta Pao T'a, standing on a mound of red earth. This pagoda dates from the Sung dynasty with which it is connected

²¹⁹ No accommodation for European visitors exists near the tombs, so those who wish to visit them cannot do better than apply to Messrs. Thos. Cook & Sons who will give all information and assist in planning the trip. By special permission, obtainable from the Wai Chiao Pu, visitors may stop in the enclosure at the *yamén* of the mandarin in charge of the 4,000 Bannermen employed as guards and caretakers. But even here they must provide their own food, beds, servants, etc.

by a quaint legend. When the first Sung emperors established their sway in K'ai Fêng Fu, they found first a dangerous opponent, and later a powerful supporter in Yang Chi-yeh, "Prince of Han" (in Shansi), the father of eight gallant sons borne to him by his no less gallant wife, a lady who acted more than once as Commander-in-Chief of her husband's armies. This was just the era—about A.D. 1000—when the Liaos in Peking saw their fortunes rise under the leadership of the brave Empress Hsiao Jui-chih. We remember her best, perhaps, as the builder of Po Wang Shan in memory of her six sons killed on the battlefield.²²⁰ Now in a campaign against old Yang Chi-yeh, she saw him lose all of his sons but one. But while she survived her sorrow, the old soldier succumbed to his. Was it some chord of sympathy, a mother's pity for a father's grief—a human sentiment stronger than the enmity of war—which induced her to honour Yang Chi-yeh's memory by burying his body, that had fallen into her hands, under the Ta Pao T'a? His sole surviving son, however, could not rest while his father's corpse was in the possession of the conqueror, and enlisted the help of a valiant captain—a man with miraculous power to throw out fire from a magic vessel. When they failed to recover the aged hero's remains from the empress by force, they set alight the hill where the pagoda stands by supernatural means, and thus gained access to the sepulchre. Yang Chi-yeh's

²²⁰ See Chapter XV.

bones were removed to K'ai Fêng Fu, but ever since the earth around the pagoda has remained red as though on fire. Needless to say, this story of filial piety appeals greatly to the Chinese.

Forty miles from Peking, near Cho Chou, we pass a village with large stone monuments. The inscription on one informs us that this is the native place of Liu Pei, founder of the Later Han dynasty (A.D. 221). A little further on stands another, erected as a memorial to Chang Fei, the mighty man of his cups.²²¹ For the Chinese these names have endless and colourful associations. Their Iliad, the "San Kuo Chih," records the adventures of these heroes, and it is well nigh impossible to attend a theatrical performance at which some incident connected with their lives will not be acted. The third member of the famous trio, sometimes called the God of War, was Kuan Yü, who entered into the relationship of sworn brotherhood with Liu Pei and Chang Fei by taking the celebrated "Oath of the Peach Orchard."

At Kao Pei Tien, a former boundary between the Yen and Chou states in the third century B.C., connection is made with a small branch line, built at the wish of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi for the use of the sovereigns when visiting the tombs of their ancestors. This railway runs as far as Liang Ko Chuang whence it is rather more than an hour by donkey to the Hsi Ling.

²²¹ See *North China*, by Madrolle, and Chapter II.

The site of the Western Mausolea was selected by order of the Emperor Yung Cheng, who in 1730 despatched Prince Yi²²² and the Viceroy of the Liang Kiang provinces to find a suitable location for his final resting place. They chose well. What could be lovelier than the undulating foothills of the foreground, now concealing secluded valleys, now unveiling them suddenly, or than the complete amphitheatre of mountains in the background? There is nothing funereal about the place—no unpleasant reminder of a cemetery. It appears rather as some splendid private domain, which indeed it is, being the property of the Ch'ing House. In the midst of pine forests, so beautifully planted, so carefully preserved, run mile after mile well kept roads, ideal for riding or walking. Here and there they emerge from under the long arches of the sombre trees into broad sunny spaces. Or again the big trunks of the giant firs lead like two rows of pillars to a marble bridge over a little winding river starred with tiny yellow pond-lilies. A crane perched on an overhanging branch recalls a Japanese cut velvet; a flashing dragon-fly poised over the water might serve as a design for a fan.

We climb a low ridge for a general view of the tombs. Up to the threshold of their sanctuaries, the green forest rolls like a gigantic motionless wave that never breaks. The blue sky above is without fleck or

²²² See Chapter XV, "Pai Chia T'an."

stain, and "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" is spread as a hand above the tree tops.

Though similar in plan to the Ming sepulchres, these Manchu graves differ in that each has its own avenue of animals, its own "Dragon and Phoenix Portal," its own tablet-house—on a smaller scale than Yung Loh's common approach. This is necessitated by the fact that the enclosure is much larger, being over 20 miles in circumference, and most of the tombs are widely separated from each other. The connecting link is supplied by a wall, surrounding the whole enclosure, with one main entrance gate, the classical "Ta Hung Mên," flanked by beautiful marble *p'ai lous*.

It was undoubtedly Yung Cheng's intention that all his successors should lie near him here. But when his son and heir, Ch'ien Lung, came to fix the place of his grave, he decided on the Tung Ling in preference to the Hsi Ling, for he argued that if he were buried beside his father, every succeeding sovereign would follow his example and the tombs of the Emperors Shun Chih and K'ang Hsi would be left solitary in the Eastern Mausolea. He therefore expressed a desire that the two sites should serve alternately as the burial places of his successors, his immediate heir using the Western Tombs, the following sovereign—the Eastern and so on. But the rule thus laid down was not followed by the Emperor Tao Kuang whose grave is at the Hsi Ling instead of the Tung Ling, for he could not bear to be separated from his father even in death.

The Imperial Tombs in the Hsi Ling are :—

The T'ai Ling, tomb of Yung Cheng (posthumous title Shih Tsung), buried in 1737. This monarch was selected by K'ang Hsi, as the ablest of his many sons, to succeed him, which he did at the age of 45. Though he does not rank either in intelligence or character with his illustrious father or his still more illustrious son, history writes him down as a stern, determined and highly creditable sovereign, equal to his office, worthy of his race—in short, entitled to stand among the rulers of China who have deserved well of their country.²²³

The Ch'ang Ling, tomb of Chia Ch'ing (Jen Tsung), buried in 1821, who came to the throne when the Manchu glory had reached its height. Nevertheless a strong hand was required to check the underlying elements of disintegration, and Chia Ch'ing was neither equal to the task nor fitted to realize the expectations of his father, Ch'ien Lung, who abdicated in his favour. His reign was one long period of insurrection, of border risings and plottings of secret revolutionary societies. Whatever remained of grandeur in his time was due to the great achievements of Ch'ien Lung who left such a profound impression that, even in the eyes of Europeans, China appeared a formidable empire nearly 20 years after his death. "However absurd the pretensions of the Emperor of China to universal supremacy may be," writes a foreign observer, "it is impossible to travel through his

²²³ See for these characteristics *A Short History of China*, by D. C. Boulger.

dominions without feeling that he has the finest country within an Imperial fence-ring in the world." At his death, aged 61, Chia Ch'ing, the Chinese prototype of Louis XV, left a diminished authority, an enfeebled power and a discontented people. His path had been smoothed for him by his predecessors; his difficulties were raised by his own indifference—the consequences of his spasmodic and ill-directed energy, scarcely less unfortunate than his habitual apathy, mingled with an excessive devotion to pleasure. Boulger aptly sums up his character and reign when he says: "In 25 years he had done as much harm to his country as his father had conferred advantages upon it in his brilliant rule of 60 years."

The Mu Ling, tomb of Tao Kuang (Hsüan Tsung), buried in 1852. Though in every sense a worthier prince than his father, he reaped the consequences of the latter's careless government. The canker so long growing began to show upon what still appeared a fair and prosperous surface when Chia Ch'ing died. As a young man Tao Kuang had seen his country under his grandfather's wise rule, but a subsequent school of adversity had imbued him with the disposition to bear calamity without, however, the vigour to grapple with it. To his credit be it recorded that he realised the extent of the national decay, avoided unnecessary expenditure and never wasted public money on his pleasures or his person. Despite the simple and manly habits of a lifetime, he died at 70 in the depth of bodily misery and mental indecision, yet still believing that he had borne and tided over the

worst crisis—a hope which the next reign was to prove a bitter illusion.

The Ch'ung Ling, tomb of Kuang Hsü (Têh Tsung), buried in 1909, grandson of Tao Kuang, who was placed on the throne as a child of three years—one of the most pathetic, helpless, yet kindly figures in history, a puppet sovereign in the hands of his indomitable aunt Tz'ü Hsi who kept the Manchu empire together for the last 50 years of its being.

The finest of all these tombs is the T'ai Ling. "A dream of gorgeous red, orange and yellow shrined among groups of firs, standing sharply silhouetted against a range of barrier mountains, escarped and precipitous, bright as silver where the sunbeams catch upon the outstanding rocks, but shading off into soft blue tones like the bosom feathers of some beautiful bird; glowing temples in the foreground resembling a covey of golden pheasants; between them and the beholder—marble bridges and straight stone paths, leading onward to the more sacred precincts of the tombs—these latter, guarded by large square doors of brilliant crimson, brass-bound and studded with gilded bosses, august in the rigidity of their angles, austere in the simplicity of their outlines; engirdling walls of deep red, a red that shows richly from beneath the great boughs of the pines with here and there a white-stemmed poplar"²²⁴—such is the picture stored in our memories of the T'ai Ling.

²²⁴ *Round About my Peking Garden*, by Mrs. A. Little.

The "Spirit Hall," raised on a terrace decorated with bronze incense-burners in the shape of cranes and stags, is the culminating point of colour and splendour. What does this temple hold within? Polite attendants open the fourfold doors with odd-shaped keys, climbing a ladder to reach the highest lock far above a man's head, and we enter a room that seems puny in comparison with Yung Loh's massive hall but has the compensating advantage of being in perfect repair. The high ceiling is upheld by pillars lacquered in gold. Against a background of yellow embroidered curtains, which cover the recesses where the tablets are kept, stand three thrones, draped with yellow brocade. The central throne bears the tablet-stand. Another triple door leads to the tree-planted court before the grave-mound and the tower that conceals the grave entrance. "Soul Tower" and tumulus are again copied from Yung Loh's, only smaller, but the slab closing the tomb is of carved tile-work instead of stone. In nearly all respects, indeed, these Manchu tombs resemble those of the Chinese Ming emperors. There are the same ovens for burnt offerings, built of encaustic bricks, the same solemn groves in the inner courtyard, the same stone copies of sacrificial vessels before the tomb, but low down among the trees and far away. At the Ming Ling, however, all is in ruins; here all is brilliant, as if made yesterday.

A short distance behind the T'ai Ling is the T'ai Tung Ling, the beautiful grave of Yung Cheng's empress

Hsiao Sheng (Nihulu),²²⁵ mother of Ch'ien Lung. Except that the carvings and embroideries in the sacrificial hall are not dragons but phoenixes, it is practically a replica of the tomb of her husband.

Quite near the T'ai Ling group is the Ch'ang Ling where Chia Ch'ing lies, and associated with it likewise is the grave of his empress consort (the Ch'ang Hsi Ling), mother of the Emperor Tao Kuang. The Ch'ang Ling is exactly like the T'ai Ling only a shade less grand, everything being on a slightly diminished scale. There is just an indication here that times were going down, that Chia Ch'ing, in death as in life, enjoyed neither the power nor the pomp of his forefathers.

The *p'ai lous* at the entrance are missing, and the approach curves off almost informally from the older tomb. A small avenue of stone animals—only one pair of each kind—constitutes the "Spirit Road." Quaint creatures they are too. The man who carved the lions evidently never saw a live model; working from descriptions he made a caricature of the king of beasts with a supercilious smile. As for the camels one might say like Bungay of Bandiloo: "The 'umps allus seemed to me kinder onnateral and oncalled-for-like, and kalkilated to make folk feel creepy." A tablet-house stands as usual surrounded by four tall stone pillars engirdled by dragons, and griffin-topped. A "Dragon and Phoenix Gate" with handsome insets of tiles divides the buildings from the

²²⁵ See Chapter XIII, "New Summer Palace."

majesty of the trees. Did ever roofs show their glorious colouring to better advantage than these in this peaceful space cut out of the surrounding forest—this silent opening among woods, so full of poetry and repose?

Only the Mu Ling differs from the other tombs. It lies far to the south in a little valley of its own and strikes a note of originality which we would like to think was due to rebellion against the usual slavish imitation on the part of the builder. To tell the truth, it was nothing of the kind. Tao Kuang who lies here was parsimonious, as we know. He sacrificed the avenue of animals to save money. He skimmed on the grave itself, rejecting the usual expensive tumulus and building a high concrete-covered mound, circular in shape and raised on terraces, instead.²²⁶ Then, like so many careful spenders, he burst into sudden extravagance over his sacrificial hall, inscribed as the "Palace of Distinguished Benefits," and built the whole of aromatic sandal-wood which in its polished simplicity is more effective than brilliant painting.

A very lovely but long all-day excursion, too often omitted by travellers, may be made from this tomb around to the foot of the mountains which we see from the T'ai Ling and Ch'ang Ling. Here stand three old pagodas, remnants of temples more ancient than the tombs. The hard climb to the two, half-way up the hills, will surely repay us with a magnificent view. But the

²²⁶ This is the common form of the tombs of non-reigning members of the Imperial family.

peasants in the valley advise us not to attempt the ascent. A storm is coming. Still we persist. No sooner have we reached the top than the tempest bursts, and for over an hour we are in the midst of the broken storm-cloud with the crash and roll of thunder all around us. Then it lifts as suddenly as it descended. Already when we start on the downward trail, we see dimly, through the veils of dissipating mist, clouds that hang like islands in the blue beneath. And as we watch, they blush to a rosy pink. We are so high above the solid world, and the whole atmosphere so heavy with moisture, that patches of the green earth appear like mossy stones at the bottom of deep water.

All the way down the valley hosts of little green frogs hop ahead of us along the pathway and the startled splash as they fall back into some rivulet is sharp and clear. The rocks are still wet and shining. Big drops of rain still tremble on the thatched eaves of cottages and the crops lie prone as though very tired. In these farther limits of the enclosure, inside the encircling "*fêng-shui*" walls, the peasants cultivate their little plots of land unrebuked—though theoretically they are forbidden to till this consecrated soil.

But by the time we enter the forest again, the sun is shining brightly and every dripping leaf has become a jewel. The vivid wood-peckers have already resumed work on tree-trunks dark brown with wet. The golden orioles are flashing off in search of provisions, the doves are cooing in the eaves of all the little green-tiled tombs,

the secluded resting-places of concubines or child princes and princesses which no one visits because they are tucked away in quiet corners and cannot compare with the graves of their parents. But just because they are so hidden and forgotten the swallows perch boldly on their memorial tablets to dry their wings—hosts of them, all with their heads to the road like curious spectators. They seem in no wise disturbed by our coming—remain quite still looking down upon us as mere passing phenomena. In fact the vast majority refuse to take us seriously.

The Ch'ung Ling, Kuang Hsü's tomb, is practically outside the enclosure and may most conveniently be seen on the way back to the station. Its spotless monuments make a most impressive ensemble from a distance. On closer inspection, we find the marble of poorer quality, the workmanship inferior—perhaps because this grave was only finished under the Republican Government which could not be expected to take much interest in an Emperor's resting place, though it did make a special grant of 3,000,000 taels to complete it. The Empress Lung Yü is buried near her husband.²²⁷ This is rather

²²⁷ The idea that an emperor once entombed may be no more disturbed, and that his widow must therefore have a special grave chamber of her own, laid heavy charges on the Imperial Court, for the making of these vaults was an enormous expense. As the Chinese had a special aversion to having superiors (men) disturbed in their rest by inferiors (women), the question whether an empress should lie by the side of her spouse was, in accordance with the strict rules of propriety, made to depend generally on whether she died before or after him. If she died before his burial, her coffin might be left in some temporary resting-place until his grave was sealed. But if she died later she was usually given a special tomb of her own.

tragic considering that they hated each other in life, and kept apart as much as possible. The woman he did love, the Pearl Concubine who was thrown down a well by the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, is buried on the opposite hill side in a small neglected tomb with one lonely poplar growing out of the little tumulus.²²⁸

The ex-Emperor Hsüan T'ung, though still a child, already has his mausoleum in course of preparation on a site to the east, a few *li* distant from Kuang Hsü's burial place. This custom, of very ancient date, is quite common among the Chinese who consider it very dignified in the present life to possess one's own grave; when built during the lifetime of the person who is to occupy it, this has the special name of "Longevity Region."

The Tung Ling is even finer than the Hsi Ling. The enclosure is vaster, the forests older and grander and the Great Wall itself forms the northern boundary crowning the barrier mountains that

"like giants stand,
To sentinel an enchanted land."

Unfortunately these Eastern Tombs are ninety miles from Peking, several days hard travel by primitive Chinese means of transport, so that but few venture on this expedition.²²⁹

²²⁸ See "Ti Wang Miao," Chapter X.

²²⁹ For a good map of the Tung Ling region and an accurate description of the various stages, inns, etc., see *Voyage d'Etude aux Tong Lings*, by Captain Dubreuil.

Five emperors lie in the magnificent park, including the most famous of the Manchu sovereigns.

The Hsiao Ling contains the mortal remains of Shun Chih, buried 1663 with the posthumous title of Shih Tsu—the very same characters given to Kublai Khan. After the first years of consolidation of Manchu power by his famous uncle the Dorgun Amah Wang,²³⁰ Shun Chih took over the reins of Government at fourteen, formed and adapted the new régime, compiled a code of laws and cemented the ties between China and Lamaist Thibet. His strong leaning towards religion was so marked that it gave ground to the legends of his abdication and retirement into a monastery. "Quite apart from the delicacy of his constitution, which probably had a share in creating in him a distaste for the wearisome formalities and futilities of a monarch's life, he seems to have been intended by nature to be a pensive student, perhaps even a religious recluse," says Johnston in his *The Romance of an Emperor*. But despite legend, there is no conclusive evidence that he ever resigned his responsibilities. Among the founders of Manchu greatness, he deserves full credit for his sincerity of purpose, his moderation, wisdom and foresight towards a conquered people, thus paving the way for K'ang Hsi to reap, through the love and reverence of his subjects, the allegiance he himself secured through military prowess and a lucky star.

²³⁰ See "Mahakala Miao," Chapter IX, also Chapter XIV, "T'ien T'ai Shan," and Chapter XX.

The Ching Ling is the last resting place of K'ang Hsi (Sheng Tsu), buried 1723, third son of Shun Chih—a most remarkable man in all respects. While still in his teens, he put down one formidable rebellion, and for the greater part of his long reign he was planning or conducting diverse campaigns in Mongolia and Central Asia. Yet he found time to do a great work of internal administration, to build, to encourage literature and art, to write himself, to win the admiration of those Jesuits whose talents adorned his Court, and the friendship of a kindred spirit in Russia's giant sovereign, Peter the Great, his contemporary. Boulger's appreciation gives life to this historic figure. "The place of K'ang Hsi, among Chinese sovereigns," he says, "is clearly defined. He ranks on almost equal terms with the two greatest of them all—T'ai Tsung (of the T'ang dynasty) and his own grandson Ch'ien Lung. Just posterity will beyond doubt assign to this prince a distinguished place among the monarchs of all nations." "Brave, generous, wise, active and vigilant in policy, of profound and extended genius, having nothing of the pomp and indolence of Asiatic Courts although his power and wealth were both immense," . . . so de Mailla describes him. In literary attainments he proved the equal, if not the superior, of the learned Chinese scholars of his day. His poems were the most widely read book in China. In addition he knew Latin, Mongolian and Thibetan. The end of the life of this great and good man was marred, however, by domestic troubles and disputes. Yet he died on the

summits of splendour and sorrow with supreme dignity and courage.

The Yü Ling is the tomb of Ch'ien Lung (Kao Tsung), buried 1799, fourth son of Yung Cheng—often called "the greatest monarch of China." As we stand beside his grave, the whole glorious epoch of his reign—the most important in modern Chinese history, comes back to mind. The unsurpassed military exploits, the unequalled literary, artistic and administrative achievements of the period would stamp it as an age of unexampled prosperity in any country. How well this monarch established the supremacy of his warrior race, how well he enlisted the co-operation of a great people, how well he employed his resources in extending his dominions from Siam to Siberia and Nepal to Korea! K'ang Hsi accomplished much, yet he also left much undone. Ch'ien Lung succeeded in everything he undertook and succeeded wholly—so much so that from the military point of view there remained no conquest for the loftiest ambition to accomplish when he at last sheathed his sword and retired into private life. Yet his dream was not to be remembered as a soldier, but rather as the kindly paternal ruler, father of his people, which is the highest ideal of a Chinese emperor. This too he realised by unremitting attention to the nation's wants, and zeal in furthering what he considered its best interests—realised so well that by common consent the title of Magnificent was attached to his reign. With his death, the vigour of China began to ebb. The blind folly, the

feeble-minded vascillation and miserable trickery by which this magnificent heritage was muddled away, is one of the saddest tragedies in the story of kings.

The Ting Ling is the resting place of the fourth son of Tao Kuang, Hsien Fêng (Wen Tsung), buried in 1865, the dissolute, stubborn, narrow-minded heir of an unlucky father. Although at the outstart of his reign he took upon himself, in an official decree, all the blame for the calamities which overtook China, he still retained an exaggerated idea of his own importance with no power to maintain it. The disastrous Taiping Rebellion and the second European war soon proved the hollowness of such pretensions. He died at Thirty in the Jehol palace, a fugitive from international justice,²³¹ leaving the throne to his only son.

The Hui Ling is the tomb of T'ung Chih (Mu Tsung), buried in 1879. During his minority, some efforts at reform were undertaken by men like Tseng Kuo-fan, Tso Tsung-t'ang and Li Hung-chang under the joint regency of the two empresses. When he took over the Government at the age of seventeen, he was by all accounts a person who wished men well enough. But two years after his accession he died of smallpox, and waited for burial with his wife Alutê, supposed to have been another victim, like Kuang Hsü's Pearl Concubine, of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi's cruelty—a sweet, young figure, “to whom will be given the sympathy of all ages.”

²³¹ See “Old Summer Palace,” Chapter XIII.

Besides the sovereigns, there are the tombs of more than two score Imperial persons scattered through the park—of empresses and concubines, those uncrowned favourites who sometimes did much to shape the course of events, notwithstanding the popular Western idea that women wield no power in China—of sons and daughters of prolific monarchs like K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung—and in the Manchus virility and greatness ever went together—who died while still of tender years. One is always coming upon such tombs in the forest, all so very similar that a detailed description of each would be superfluous. Yet each one, if we have the patience to seek it out, to learn the story of its occupant, forms a piece of the mosaic of the Manchu régime—part of the picture where greatness and misrule are painted together.

Just outside the space reserved for the Imperial family, we notice two tombs. One is the grave of K'ang Hsi's old teacher whom the Emperor so greatly loved and revered that he permitted him to be buried as near his person as convention allowed. There is something very touching in the story of the influence of this venerable man over the absolute monarch whose youthful outbursts of anger he could calm with a word, whose generous impulses he could quicken with a smile. For he represents all that was brave, true, noble, in the old order of things, and is an example of that peculiar Oriental relationship between teacher and pupil which often endures throughout the life-time of both—even

when the pupil rises in position far higher than his master.

The second tomb beyond the boundaries is that of the upright and fearless Censor Wu Ko-t'u who protested against the illegal succession of the Emperor Kuang Hsü by committing suicide near the tomb of T'ung Chih, whose ghost was disinherited by the new nomination to the throne.

It is curious how frequently the Imperial tombs have been the scene of protests and unseemly wrangles, wherein grievances and passions long pent up within the palace precincts find utterance.²³² One case of this kind occurred in 1909 on the occasion of the burial of Tz'ü Hsi, when the surviving consorts of T'ung Chih and Kuang Hsü, having quarrelled with the new Empress Dowager (Lung Yü) on a question of precedence, refused to return to the city and remained in dudgeon at the tomb until a special mission under an Imperial Duke was sent humbly to beg them to come back, causing no small scandal among the orthodox.

Even the building of an Imperial tomb at the Tung Ling generally involved squabbles over the percentages which should go into the pockets of the various officials in charge. It was certainly a huge undertaking. Take for example the preparation and labour involved in transporting the large blocks of marble for the effigies of the stone camels and elephants in the avenues of animals.

²³² See *China Under the Empress Dowager*, by Bland and Backhouse.

Rennie, Surgeon of the British Legation, gives an interesting account in his book *Peking and the Pekinese* of how one such mass of stone was carried to the spot where it was placed in position and hewn into shape. "In 1862," he says, "I heard of a large block of marble weighing 60 tons which was at that time in course of passing through Peking on a six-wheeled truck drawn by 600 horses and mules. This mass of marble came from one of the quarries about 100 miles from the capital and was on its way to the Eastern tombs, there to be cut into an elephant to form one of the decorations of the mausoleum of the late Emperor Hsien Fêng. Its dimensions were 15 feet long, 12 feet thick, and 12 feet broad. The horses and mules were harnessed to two immense hawsers running parallel with one another from the truck, the length of each of them being nearly a quarter of a mile. On the block was hoisted the Imperial flag, and on the truck a mandarin and some attendants were seated. One of the latter had a gong which he sounded after each halt when all were ready to start. Other gongs were then sounded along the line, and at a given signal the carters simultaneously cracked their whips, and off started the horses with their unwieldy load. The line was led by a man bearing a flag and all orders were given by signals made with flags."

A description of the burial of Hsien Fêng, in 1865, as typical of an Imperial interment, may also be of interest :

"In the autumn of this year took place the burial of Hsien Fêng, the preparation of whose tomb had

been proceeding for just four years. With him was laid his consort Sokota, who had died in 1850, a month before her husband's accession to the throne and whose remains had been awaiting sepulchre in a village temple for 15 years. . . . As usual the funeral ceremonies and preparation of the tomb involved vast expenditure. The emperor's mausoleum alone had cost nominally 10,000,000 taels of which amount, of course, a very large sum had been diverted for the benefit of the Household and others.

"The young Emperor and the Empresses Regent proceeded as in duty bound to the Tung Ling to take part in the ceremonies, and Prince Kung, who had been preparing the funeral arrangements for His late Majesty for five years, was in attendance.

"The body of the Sovereign, in an Imperial coffin of catalpa wood richly lacquered, was borne within the huge domed grave and there deposited in the presence of the mourners on its 'Jewelled Bed-stead,' the pedestal of precious metals prepared to receive it. In the place of the concubines and servants who in olden days used to be buried alive with the deceased monarch, wooden and paper figures of life size were placed beside the coffin. The large candles were lighted, prayers were said and a great wealth of valuable ornaments arranged within the grave chamber: gold and jade sceptres, and a necklace of pearls were placed within the coffin. And when all was duly done, the great door of the chamber was slowly lowered and sealed in its place." Asleep in his eternal

night, Hsien Fêng lies for ever tranquil after his unlucky life, in the hollow enjoyment of his wealth.

The funeral ceremonies of the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, the last that will probably ever take place at the Tung Ling, were even more impressive. For four days her enormous catafalque was borne by more than a hundred bearers, over a specially-made road, to the silent spot surrounded by virgin forest and backed by the everlasting hills. Here in the mausoleum built by the faithful Yung Lu for his Imperial mistress, at a cost which stands in the Government records at 8,000,000 taels,²³³ Tz'ü Hsi, after her splendid and stormy career, found rest. Identical in plan but on a smaller scale than the Ting Ling, her husband's tomb, it lies close beside the latter, while to the west stands the grave of her colleague and co-regent, the Empress Tz'ü An.

Few mortals have sepulchres which can compare with the Chinese Imperial Mausolea, where the beauties of nature enhance the splendid specimens of the best Chinese architecture and leave on the mind of the visitor a dignified, yet not a depressing, remembrance of the mighty dead.

²³³ It was in course of construction for over 30 years. Throughout her life-time and particularly in her old age, Tz'ü Hsi took a great interest and pride in her last resting-place, visiting it at intervals and exacting the most scrupulous attention from those entrusted with its building and adornment. On one occasion in 1897, when practically completed, she had it rebuilt because the teak pillars were not sufficiently massive.

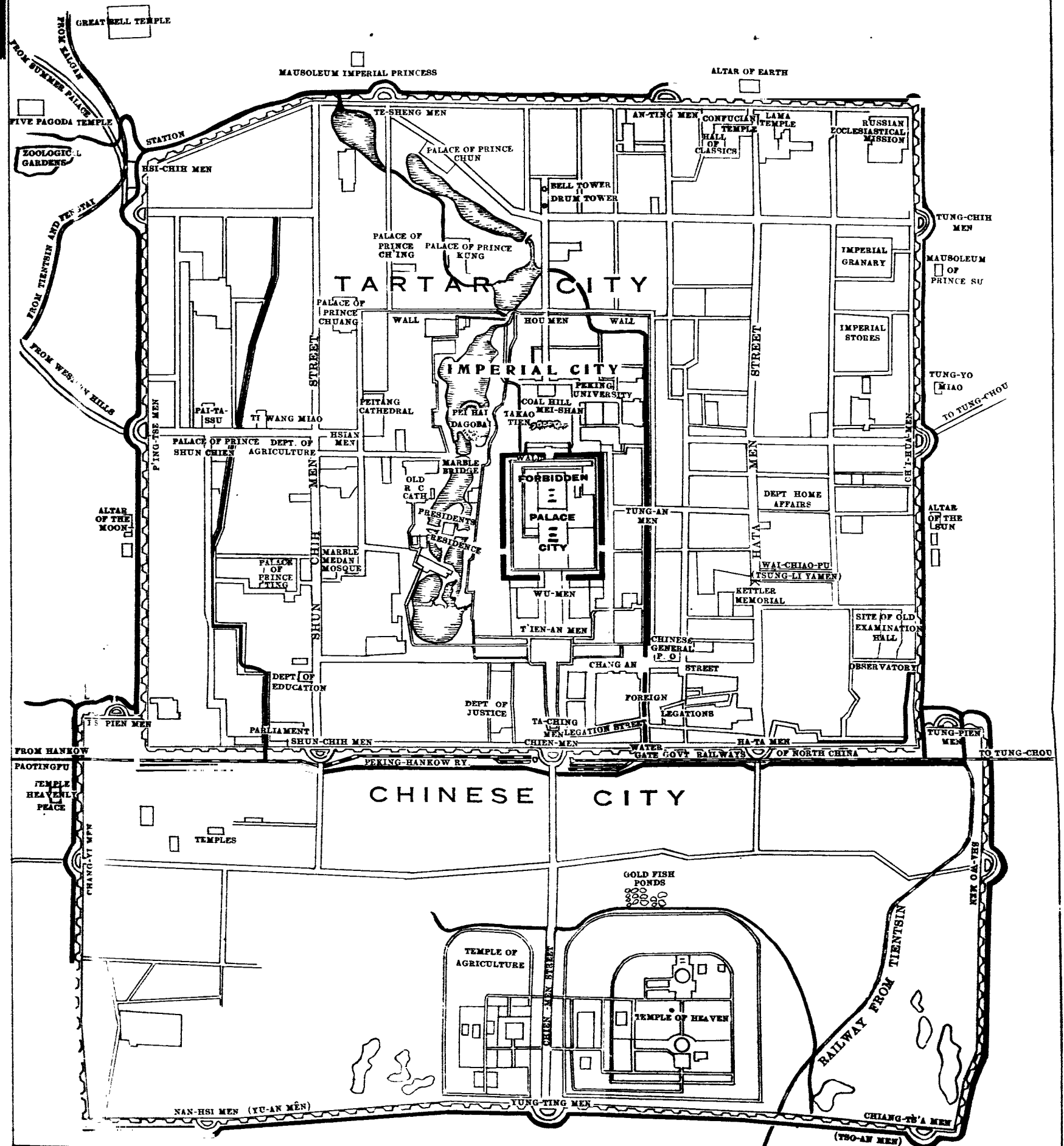
CHAPTER XVIII.

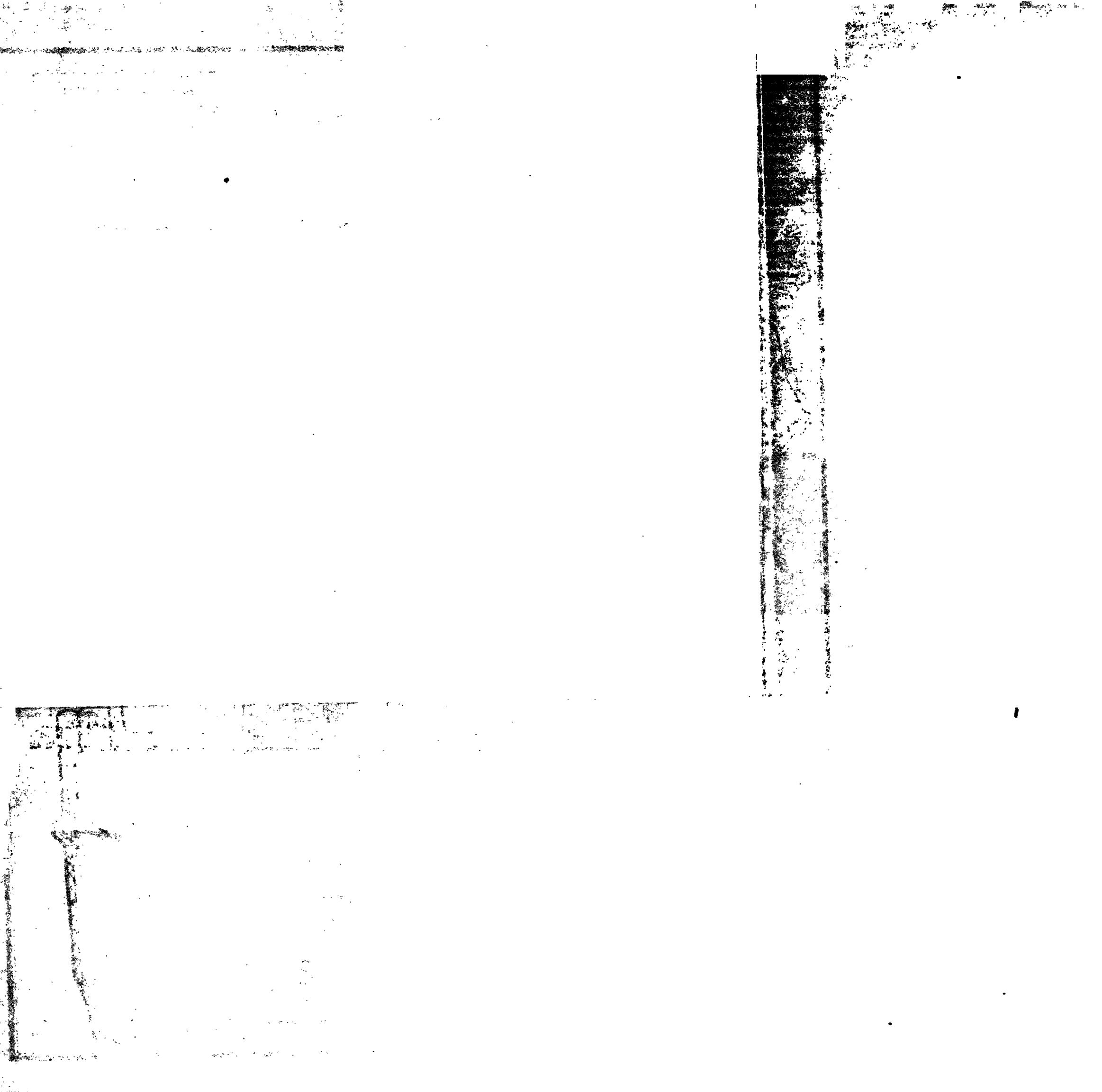
PEKING—THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

WHEN one has seen all the palaces and “done” all the temples and tombs, there still remains a never failing source of interest and amusement in Peking—the curio shops. They are the happy hunting ground of the collector in search of things Chinese, beautiful or bizarre. Few strangers can resist the temptation to bargain for old porcelains, bronzes, embroideries, or whatever appeals to individual taste, and in the resident this habit, sooner or later, develops a special mentality. We shamelessly examine the pictures on each other’s walls, turn over our host’s dishes at table in search of marks to prove their origin, pick up his lacquer after dinner to feel its weight, boldly inquire the price of his latest acquisition. Such manners, which would be considered ill-bred in Paris or London, are tolerated and understood in the “old curiosity shop,” as a witty traveller once called Peking, and if you stay long enough you will acquire them yourself.

There are two methods of shopping, at home or in the shops themselves. Choose the former and the merchants will come to you with their blue cloth-bundles which they tirelessly unfold while you sit comfortably back in an arm chair. This style of buying is an advantage to the very ignorant, and the very discerning : to the first, because anything appears to them unspeak-

YELLOW TEMPLE
□□





ably desirable ; to the second because, being old customers, the salesman knows them and brings the sort of thing they want, thus saving them the trouble of looking over a quantity of trash to find it. The average tourist gets no farther than the hotel hall where he sits between "Tiffany," as we call one particular tempter, holding out pearls and jades for inspection, and "Liberty," so named for his gorgeous stock of fabrics, singing the praises of "very nice Mandarin dance coat, too cheap."

Yet there is a special fascination in going to the actual shops. Unfortunately Peking is a city of long distances making progress slow. Moreover, the streets are full of traffic and the antiquarians are often far apart: our rickshaw-men scatter dogs and children as they run, and the sounds of busy bargaining, the inevitable "T'ai kuei" (too much) following the "To shao" (how much) pursue us as we go.

One of the first exhibitions which every stranger visits is that of the French connoisseur M. Grosjean (Kuang Mao hu-t'ung). Here beautiful collections have the advantage of being well shown in a harmonious setting, and one is saved the trouble of poking in dusty corners to unearth doubtful treasures. Another well-known place is "Paul's," near the Pei T'ang. "Paul", a Chinese Christian, gives a guarantee of the genuineness of all the pieces in his collection, which includes quaint tiles and clay figurines from tombs. Many of the tiles are labelled as dating from such great antiquity that, but for his assurance, we might be

inclined to doubt. "Remember," says he, "that the Chinese were the inventors of roof tiles—that the most ancient samples may be traced to the fifth century B.C., although the first glazed specimens belong to the first century A.D., and that tiles are the original ancestors of porcelain which developed from experiments in making them." Not the beauty but the antiquity of these grotesqueries, gargoyles and mortuary pieces appeals to collectors, especially to native collectors who value them highly.

"Other shop?" queries our "boy" after we have seen everything here and been tempted, and fallen to the extent of our means.

"Yes, other shop, boy."

And again begins the long panorama of streets trimmed with carved façades of native shops and gay with lacquered "beckoning boards," showing gilded characters on black or vermilion grounds. Strange how these Chinese ideographs, as modified for decorative purposes, make upon the brain a far greater impression than our prosaic combinations of letters: they are vivid pictures; they seem to live, to speak, to gesticulate.²³⁴

²³⁴ "The picturesque nature of Chinese writing . . . demands of those who wish to excel in its practice an education of eye and hand such as are required by draughtsmen. The strokes of the ordinary character are replete indeed, with light and supple touches, sudden stops and graceful curves, waxing energies and gradually waning lines such as only a long apprenticeship of the brush could give. The Chinese *lettré* is firmly convinced that the characters of a perfect writer convey something of their graphic beauty to the ideas they express, and give a delicate intrinsic shade of meaning to every thought enshrined in them."—Bushell.

To them we owe much of the amazing picturesqueness of these streets—to them and to the old custom, still clung to by petty tradesmen, of putting images or symbols of their wares over their doors. The shoemaker's big paper boot, fit for the King of the Mountains, the giant pipe suitable for his mate, the large gilded coin of the money changer, the hosier's felt stocking hanging from the eaves, the feather duster outside the brush shop—are signs that cry out to the eyes, symbols that smile or grimace like faces, as they fly by.

In a few minutes, the rickshaws stop before a shop on the Wang Fu Ching Ta Chieh. Here, among other things, are treasures we will hesitate to afford—watches made in Europe, gorgeously enamelled, wreathed in pearls, studded in diamonds, tiny timepieces set in thumb rings, larger ones such as Chinese princes delighted to hang from their belts in days when belts fitted loosely over satin robes. The prices asked are absurdly high to those who remember how cheaply such jewels were obtainable after 1900. But newcomers buy, nibbling first gingerly and then like hungry fishes, swallowing the coveted bait, hook and all, to go boasting afterwards of their excellent meal. *A propos* of watches, we are reminded of the story of how one such lovely timepiece broke up a friendship. Two secretaries of Legation, inseparable companions and equally enthusiastic collectors, went together to hunt for watches. They found a treasure which both ardently desired. One, however,

thought the curio so much too dear that he relinquished hope of buying it for himself, though he offered to come back next day and get it for his companion. This was agreed between them, and in the evening, at the Club, the would-be owner of the trinket waited eagerly to take possession of it. "Sorry, *cher ami*," said the man who had been shopping, "the watch was bought by some one else this morning." Condolences, vain regrets! But a few weeks later the self-same watch was seen in the cabinet of the secretary who had promised to purchase it for his colleague. Chinese "boys" have an officious habit of setting out what a master carefully hides away, arguing that when master entertains, he must make the best impression possible on master's guests. The moral of this little story is: "Never take even your best friend with you to a curio shop. He may want what you want. You cannot decently over-bid him—and therefore you risk losing both your curio and your friend."

Quite a number of the best antiquarians will be found outside the Ch'ien Mên, in the direction of the famous Liu Li Ch'ang. In olden days it was the invariable rule that merchants or artisans belonging to the same guild lived in the same quarter. The carpenters and furniture-makers had a street to themselves, so did the lantern-makers, the silver workers, the brass manufacturers, the sellers of pictures and porcelains. No doubt the custom developed to assure mutual safety. The precincts where the most valuable things were sold could

be closed off from the rest of the town with wooden gates, in case of riot or disturbance. But nowadays the habit is no longer rigidly followed, and there is not a corner within the walls where we may not hunt for curios.

Do not imagine that the finest shops necessarily sell the best things. Often the merchant hidden away in a blind alley has the handsomest ornaments—just as his store has the most high-sounding title. We know of one single-roomed shack called the "Institution of Felicitous Understanding" where an old European clock, valued at \$3,000, is for sale, and another tiny dug-out called the "Establishment of Ten Thousand Glories" with a most admirable box of Yung Cheng enamel. In the filthy local *Cour des Miracles*, behind the Ch'ien Mèn street, many a good piece has been picked up.

We may search and search for days and weeks and months and find nothing worth buying, but the hope of drawing a prize in the artistic lottery keeps us interested. Our knowledge may be deficient and inexact, but what we lack in learning we make up in love. The stone floors of the shops are cold in winter, we do not feel them; the tiny showrooms stuffy and often an offence to the nose in summer, no matter. The wonders of Chinese art scattered through the museums and collections of Europe, America and Japan, and described in books like Bushell's *Chinese Art Handbook*, have encouraged people to expect that Peking is an inexhaustible treasure-house, where beautiful works of art at bargain prices may still be easily found. Something surely, they think,

has been overlooked or stolen from the Palace—something perhaps remains from the loot of 1860 or 1900.

Alas, the days of marvellous finds and bargains, at least in genuine old bronzes, the better known porcelains, and the finest pictures, are over. Do not imagine that if by chance a good piece comes on the market, any stranger will pick it up for a song. Whether it appears in Peking itself or in the provinces, the bronze, or picture, or porcelain of value, is offered first to well-known antiquarians who are waiting for just such opportunities and waiting with ample funds. Yamanaka, the big Japanese dealer, for instance, keeps experts in Peking the whole year round. Such men naturally get the best because the dealers know them. They are difficult to cheat because they have years of experience and a perfect familiarity with the books of Chinese critics who have for so many centuries catalogued and described all the masterpieces, as they appeared, with a wealth of detail and discrimination unknown elsewhere in the world. At the same time these recognised buyers offer a permanent market, appreciate the value of what is for sale, and are generally willing to pay it.

This by way of warning to the novice who is prone to imagine that in a short time he has become an expert and thinks he may discover what others, who are playing the game ever and always, have overlooked. A real connoisseur of porcelain, let us say, since foreigners are generally most interested in porcelain, has a natural gift cultivated by long experience. It is a good rule, before

buying expensive things, to spend some time studying the genuine works of art in the Museum or private collections to form the taste and eye. But it is equally essential to read the books of our standard authors on the subject, and learn to distinguish the various pastes and glazes, date marks, etc.²³⁵ After a little while one becomes if not exactly expert, at least wise enough to escape obvious pitfalls. Too much dependence, however, must not be placed upon marks or upon the decoration: it is upon the education of the eye that collectors must chiefly rely to judge the general merits of the specimens themselves. No training is so good as the handling of fine old pieces in which the grain of the porcelain, the colours and the decoration can be studied, and the knowledge thus gained becomes the experience which is, above everything else, the necessary equipment for any one who collects old China.

Never forget in the enthusiasm of the moment, when some attractive specimen strikes your fancy, that every trick of Western antiquarians, and a thousand original ones of their own, are familiar to Chinese dealers. They peel their pearls, bury their bronzes to give them a fine patina, dye their furs, smoke their embroideries, imitate

²³⁵ The distinguishing marks on Chinese porcelain, where marks are used, generally indicate a period or a factory. They are often forged but careful study aids one to detect such forgeries. For the student's help, there are many books on Chinese ceramics. Bushell is one of the greatest authorities. See also *Ancient Porcelain, A Study in Chinese Mediæval Industry and Trade*, by Hirth, *L'Art Chinois*, by Paléologue, and *Chinese Porcelain* with many fine illustrations by W. G. Gulland. *Chats on Oriental China, A Practical Guide to the Collector*, by J. F. Blacker, is an unpretentious handbook, excellent for the beginner.

jades, tint rock-crystals, forge date marks and cleverly insert old bottoms in new vases. The temptation to cheat the novice is generally irresistible, in quality, in price, or both, and the most ingratiating and convincing salesman is often the worst offender.

Mended porcelains—and many of the genuine pieces that come on the market nowadays are repaired with a consummate skill that cheats the eye—can often be detected by tapping them with a coin, when the difference in ring between the original part and the dull sound from the composition is easy to distinguish.

Approach all curios, and those who deal in them, with suspicion. A thief may be considered innocent till he is proved guilty, but a first-class K'ang Hsi vase (according to the merchant) should be held guilty of fraud till it is proved to be above suspicion by some one who knows and is disinterested. Such porcelains, if genuine and unbroken are so scarce there is every reason for mistrust. But if, in addition, the dealer offers the piece as a bargain, telling a hard-luck story about lack of capital, then let caution wait upon enthusiasm. Whenever a Chinese offers to let a good piece go at a sacrifice, be sure that the sacrifice is on the side of the buyer and the victim is his pocket book, not the shop-keeper. The single season when a large reduction in prices may be expected is just before the Chinese New Year. At this great settling period every shop-keeper is obliged to pay his debts and, for the ready money which is absolutely necessary to keep up his credit for

the next year, he will often sell cheaply to the first bidder.

The few standard porcelains still obtainable in Peking²³⁶ command enormous prices. The blue "medallion bowls" which could be bought 15 years ago at \$10, for example, now fetch \$100 in the local market. A *pi-t'ung*, or brush jar, of the old K'ang Hsi blue and white, from which Dutch potters copied their Delft ware, was lately sold to a rich Chinese for \$2,000. We know of one pair of vases priced at \$14,000 and another pair, similar to some in the Museum, at \$5,000. Two Ch'ien Lung tea cups brought £15 the other day and were re-sold in London for £100. This proves that the value of good things is real, not fictitious as some people pretend, and for those who know enough not to be deceived—unfortunately even experts sometimes disagree—they are an excellent investment.

Middle-class Chinese porcelains are dearer to-day in Peking than in Paris, New York, London or Tokio. With normal freights, it pays to collect them in the West, ship them back and sell them to globe-trotters in China's capital. Furthermore, European imitations of Oriental porcelains have been sent out and put on the local market to deceive the tourist. Certain European manufacturers have long made a specialty of imitating Chinese porcelains. M. Sampson of Paris is widely known for his wonderful imitations of Oriental enamel

²³⁶ See Chapter VI, "Museum."

porcelain and his finest specimens are most deceptive. Again near Toledo in Spain perfect copies of Oriental china were made.

Antique bronzes²³⁷ are just as beautiful and valuable as porcelains, though they appeal less to Westerners. The Chinese themselves are great collectors of bronzes. The sale of Tuan Fang's famous collection, broken up after his death, brought native bidders from every province and caused as great a sensation in the Far Eastern art-world as an auction of Greek marbles would in Europe.

Practically imperishable, this metal has the glamour of great antiquity, for the art of making and decorating bronze was known in China many centuries before Christ. The inscriptions on nearly all the historic pieces show early forms of the written character, and their shapes recall the first earthenware vessels from which they were copied in the days when the Chinese were slowly struggling towards civilization. Above all a ghostlier value attaches to them—faint memories of the half forgotten lives and vanishing beliefs with which they were connected. Sometimes they bring queer fancies to the mind about wrecks of souls, or at least of soul things. It is difficult to assure one's self that of all the movements and faces the mirrors once reflected, of all the services where the incense burners and wine jars were used, nothing haunts them now. "One cannot help

²³⁷ See Chapter VI, "Museum."

imagining that whatever has been, must continue to be somewhere—that by approaching these old bronzes very stealthily, and turning a few of them suddenly face up to the light, one might be able to catch the Past in the very act of shrinking and shuddering away.”

While they admit that some fine specimens were made in later centuries, native amateurs consider as first class only those bronzes belonging to the Three Dynasties (the Hsia, Shang and Chou 2205-255 B.C.) commonly known as the “San Tai” period. So many vessels were buried at the time of the burning of the books under Ch’in Shih Huang (255-210 B.C.) that they continue to be yielded from the soil, and authentic specimens are still obtainable, though naturally at high prices, ranging from a few hundred to many thousands of dollars. Several specimens, lately bought by a collector, are as fine as anything in the Museum, notably a tea-pot with a dragon spout for pouring sacrificial wine, another inlaid vessel in the form of a duck for the same purpose,²³⁸ and a small incense burner shaped like an inverted helmet and mounted on three feet, in which the rich gold alloy shows in glorious patches. Next in value come the bronzes dating from the period of the Ch’in and Han dynasties, while a third inferior class is made up of articles dating from the T’ang and Sung.

²³⁸ Such quaint animal shapes were the original models for Chinese sacrificial vessels.

Under the Mings, Buddhist influence led Chinese artists to depict gods and goddesses, but none of these pieces rival the severe forms and simple ornamentations of the Three Dynasty specimens. The latter are recognisable by their chaste shape, their designs, their inscriptions, to decypher which the help of a sinologue is essential, and their beautiful patina. Beware, however, of relying too much on the last as a proof of age. Genuine patina comes from within the bronze and depends partly on the alloy—on the presence of gold or silver with lead, tin, etc.—and partly on the soil in which the piece has been buried—whether damp, or dry and sandy. But artificial patina can be put on with wax so cleverly that it is impossible to detect until scratching with a knife or immersion in boiling water exposes the fraud.²³⁹

There are no treasures in Peking more interesting to collect than old Chinese pictures. Or more difficult to find. Or more expensive when found. Few foreigners, however, care for them because the methods of Oriental artists are so different from our own. To properly appreciate Chinese painting, as a critic justly observes, the Westerner must throw over his artistic education, his critical traditions, and all the aesthetic baggage that has been accumulated from the Renaissance to our own days. He must especially refrain from comparison of the works of Chinese painters with any of the famous

²³⁹ For further description of bronzes see *Chinese Art Handbook*, by Bushell, *L'Art Chinois*, by Paléologue, and various articles in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

canvases which are in the European collections. Thus and only thus can he escape the influences which blind him to the meaning of Oriental painting.

Probably the first pictures that will appeal to us, after we have learned a little about the subject, are the fruit and flower pieces. Was it not Whistler who frankly stated that the greatest of Western painters were clumsy in their portrayals of such subjects compared with the Oriental Masters—Whistler, who like Aubrey Beardsley, Grasset, Cheret and Lantrec, acknowledged the influence of Chinese methods on his own work? Alfred Russell Wallace speaks of a collection of Oriental sketches of plants as "the most masterly things" that he ever saw. "Every stem, leaf, and twig" he declares, "is produced by single touches of the brush: the character and perspective of very complicated plants being admirably given and the articulations of stem and leaves shown in a scientific manner." All of which is done "by a genius in the manipulation of the wrist not only unequalled but undreamed of by our old Masters."

Later we begin to appreciate the landscapes which seem to depict not only a beautiful but an ideal and happy world. Recalling the Western Hills, we realise that Chinese landscape paintings are conventional only in the sense of symbols which, once interpreted, would reveal more than our drawing can express—that notwithstanding the strangely weird impression of fantastic unreality which they at first produce they are, nevertheless, a veritable reflection of what is.

Some Western critics may argue that the meaning of any true art should need no interpretation, and the inferior character of Chinese work is proved by the admission that it is not immediately and universally recognizable. "Whoever makes such a criticism," says Lafcadio Hearn, "must imagine Western art to be everywhere equally intelligible. . . . But I can assure the reader this is not so." In truth much of our painting is as incomprehensible to Chinese, as Chinese paintings are to Europeans who have never seen China. "For an Occidental to perceive the truth, or the beauty, or the humour of Chinese pictures, he must know the scenes which these paintings reflect." They are not so much an imitation of nature, as a representation of nature which has the imprint of the artists' mind upon it. Burne Jones is unconsciously in touch with Chinese painting when he says: "I mean by a picture a beautiful romantic dream of something that never was—in a better light than ever shone." (*Greek and Chinese Art Ideals*, by Stanley).

Last of all we come to understand Chinese representations of the human face and figure. Especially in portraits, we must grow accustomed to the lack of detail. When the drawing is on a small scale it is not considered necessary to elaborate feature, and the age or condition is indicated by the style of the coiffure or the fashion of the dress. Here it is "worth while to notice," says Hearn, "that the reserves of Chinese art in the matter of facial expression accord with the ethics

of Oriental society. For ages the rule of conduct has been to mask all personal feeling as far as possible—to hide pain and passion under an exterior semblance of smiling amiability, or impassive resignation. And this suppression of individuality, in life as in art, makes it very difficult for us to discern the personality through the type.”²⁴⁰

Because they understand the subjective and suggestive principles underlying Chinese art so much better than we do, the Japanese are the greatest buyers of fine pictures in Peking to-day. They have also the advantage of being shown first all the good paintings that may come on the market. In London or Paris a rich man will immediately see the best of everything just because he is rich. Not so in the East. Chinese merchants have a proverb: “Do not spread your treasures before everyone.” Unless a buyer is known, he will never be shown the really first-class pictures—and the same rule holds true, though to a lesser extent, with all curios because the dealer dislikes to risk having his best wares not appreciated. Only for one who understands will he lovingly turn over the leaves of his beautiful books, with their studies of bird life, insect life, plant life, tree life, where each figure flung from the painter’s

²⁴⁰ The newly arrived Westerner often complains of his inability to distinguish one Chinese from another, and attributes this difficulty to the absence of strongly marked physiognomy in the race. Yet our more sharply accentuated Occidental features produce the very same effect upon the Chinese. Many and many a one has said to me: “For a long time I found it very hard to tell one foreigner from another: they all seemed to me alike.”

brush is a lesson—a revelation to perceptions unbeckoned by prejudice, an opening of the eyes to those who can see, though it be “only a spider in a wind-shaken web, a dragon-fly riding a sunbeam, a pair of crabs running through sedge, the trembling of a fish’s fins in a clear current, the lilt of a flying wasp, the pitch of a flying duck, a mantis in fighting position, or a cicada toddling up a cedar branch to sing.” Only for one who understands will he open his *shou-chüan*, those long horizontal scrolls intended to be slowly unrolled, to be enjoyed bit by bit—one theme following another, completing and resolving that which has just passed.

The difficulty of telling the original from the copy, the genuine from the false, is as great in Chinese paintings as in porcelains or bronzes. Colouring, style, quality of silk or paper, and the seal of the artist are the only means at the purchaser’s disposal. Unlike a signature the Chinese seal—above all a crystal seal—can never be exactly imitated, for, being cut by hand, only the same cutter, and he rarely, could make two identically alike. Therefore, if we carefully examine a genuine seal, it is possible with practice to distinguish the false from it.²⁴¹ An additional aid in detecting forgeries may be derived from the Chinese habit of setting the seals of consecutive

²⁴¹ Books on Chinese painting that will help the student are *Chinese Pictorial Art*, by Strehlneek, *Scraps from a Collector’s Notebook*, by Hirth, *History of Chinese Pictorial Art*, by Giles, *Painting in the Far East*, by Binyon, *Catalogue of Chinese Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum*, by Ferguson.

owners of a classical picture upon it. The innumerable hand-written poems, mounted as pictures and having an equal artistic value in native eyes, are peculiarly Chinese.

Besides these standard and expensive curios, the stranger often asks : "What is worth buying in Peking?" This question is very difficult to answer because the market is always changing. Two years ago an impoverished Manchu prince sold some very fine old lacquer furniture. To-day it might be difficult to find a single genuine piece. A year later many treasures came out of the temples of Mongolia. They were so quickly bought up that an enterprising dealer had many of them copied in Manchester and sent out to supply the demand. So the market varies continually, depending on many conditions—whether a fine Chinese private collection is broken up, or poverty obliges the monks or palace eunuchs to sell.

As a rule anything is worth buying that pleases the fancy of the buyer—provided he is getting what he pays for and not "new lamps for old." Things which appeal rather to the specialist than to the general collector are enamels, jades and lacquers.

The art of enamelling seems to have been invented at a very remote date in Western Asia whence it penetrated to Europe in the early centuries of the Christian era, but there is no evidence of its having travelled to China till much later. The best examples were made in the reigns of Yung Cheng and Ch'ien Lung. They are very scarce since this work became fashionable

in the West. Beware of modern imitations, valueless and vulgar.

There are various kinds of lacquer.²⁴² Many of them may be traced back to the Sung dynasty, some of them—to the Yuan. But lacquer is perishable, and it is unusual to find a real old piece in good condition. The red variety, nowadays much copied, may be judged by colour, depth of carving and weight. The heavier the piece, the older it is, as a rule. The gold lacquer, of which we see the best examples in palace furniture, screen-frames, etc., is inferior to the Japanese. It is the only art in which these pupils excelled their masters and reached a height of perfection never attained by the Chinese.

Old jades²⁴³ are both valuable and rare. Like bronzes they are sought after by native collectors because they are intimately connected with Chinese history and the progress of Chinese civilization. In the Chou dynasty (1122-255 B.C.) ceremonial jade ornaments were worn by the Emperor who, it is recorded, also used memorandum tablets of this favourite stone. Jade seals were made in the Han period and pieces, as we know, were buried with the dead. Jade astronomical instruments, girdle-clasps, sword-hilts and mirrors were also known in ancient times, and in more modern days jade has been used for incense burners, tea-pots, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, pen-rests, sceptres and altar pieces.

²⁴² See Chapter VI, "Museum."

²⁴³ See Chapter IV, "Funeral," and Chapter VI, "Museum."

Though the oldest pieces are not always strictly beautiful, for they lose their polish with age, a study of them is of great interest and value for the understanding of Chinese psychology and the history of Chinese customs. Even to look at good jade in good condition gives a refreshing sensation of coolness and smoothness. A Chinese connoisseur can tell with eyes closed, from the touch and the temperature, whether a piece is very old. Among Orientals the sensitive finger-tips have developed a new artistic sense which few foreigners ever acquire—the power to judge and enjoy by touch as much as by sight. Of such exquisite perceptions, as J. C. Ferguson points out in his *Outlines of Chinese Art*, we can know scarcely more than we know of those unimaginable colours invisible to the human eye, yet proven to exist by the spectroscope.

Our clumsy hands, our untrained sight will hesitate to detect imitations which they would unerringly discover—in jades as in other curios. A few simple rules may, however, help the amateur in his choice of this semi-precious stone :

When buying coloured jades, especially the valuable deep green, remember that it is frequently copied in glass. Choose that which has a translucent colour.

White jades are often imitated in soapstone. These frauds can generally be detected by their softness, and the finger nail will chip most specimens. The Chinese also have a trick of filling and polishing imperfect pieces

of jade with wax to deceive purchasers, so every piece should be most carefully examined before buying.

Often a stranger, not a curio collector but simply a lover of pretty or portable things, will inquire if there is in Peking nothing that he may buy and enjoy without technique and simply, as Howells says, "upon condition of his being a tolerably genuine human creature?"

Of course, there is. Why not embroidery? Or furs?

Among the specialties of the capital, embroideries have long been famous—so much so that a certain very effective stitch is well known as the "*point de Pékin*." Since the dis-establishment of the Empire, fine velvet throne cushions, tapestry hangings and Court gowns have been stolen or sold out of the Palace or left unredeemed in pawnshops by poor Manchus.²⁴⁴ But these things are so easily packed that they have been bought up by tourists as fast as they came on the market, till very few are left. The genuine old tapestries, *k'o-ssü*, made of small pieces woven separately and

²⁴⁴ The Chinese pawnshops, distinguished by handsome gilt-topped wooden pillars which remind one somewhat of the Totem poles of the Alaska Indians, are very curious institutions. They differ from those in the West, as they are not merely places where money is advanced on goods deposited, but also the receptacle for all spare valuables. Few Chinese keep their winter clothing at home during summer time or *vice versa*. When the season changes the appropriate clothing is released and that to be pawned put in its place. The usual interest asked is two or three per cent. per month. Pawnshops are a favourite investment of rich men.

sewed together, are rare and extremely expensive, but very decorative copies, often palmed off on the unwary as "true Ch'ien Lung," are being made to-day in Hangchow. They look well in fire screens, cushions and lampshades with their colours softened to restful shades by incense smoke. The genuine reds and blues of the old Ming pieces can not be imitated because the secret of the dye is lost, but great care should be taken to avoid bright colours made from aniline dyes—easily distinguishable, and glaring modern gold thread which tarnishes. Textiles should always be bought in a good light.

Sets of throne cushions and Court robes usually have the dragon motif, but the flower and geometrical designs are more appreciated by Westerners who often regret that the rigid canons of Chinese convention discouraged the artist from making more of such pieces.

Court gowns may be identified by the wave pattern edging the bottom of the robe, by the horse-shoe shaped cuff, and, in the case of those destined for the use of the Imperial family, by a special set of mystical symbols including the swastika, the bat, the Wheel of the Law, etc. As a general rule the greater the number of shades worked into the wave border, the more valuable the coat. Tapestry robes command a higher price than satin, and yellow gowns, whether of cloth-of-gold, tapestry, or satin, are the most expensive of all because this shade was worn only by the emperor and the empress. Dragon decoration denotes that they were worn by the former, phoenixes—by the latter.

Next in value come the orange gowns worn by princes and princesses, and then the red or blue ceremonial robes of officials. The shorter women's coats embroidered in flowers or butterflies, used by Chinese ladies on festival occasions, weddings, birthday parties, etc., are especially suitable for adapting as tea gowns and opera cloaks. The rare Lama vestments or altar pieces with ecclesiastical designs are more gaudy than beautiful.

The fur market in Peking nowadays has dwindled to comparative insignificance. Under the Empire when courtiers lined their robes with sable, silver fox, ermine, and white fox (the two last in seasons of mourning), a great many fine skins were brought down from Siberia, Manchuria and Saghalin and sold in the open market or presented to the Throne as tribute. The demand having fallen off, the supply has nearly ceased. An occasional sable coat is a good buy, since, while not comparable to Russian skins, the Chinese sables are worth, in Europe and America, three times the price asked in Peking. Sables should be bought with great caution, however. The best Chinese pelt is a golden brown and the dark specimens, so much admired by Westerners, are generally dyed. Beware also of buying old skins. They have suffered from extremes of climate for many years and the hair is liable to fall out. White foxes, flame foxes, silver foxes if really good, ermines—made into Chinese coats—martin, otter and Manchurian tiger skins are all comparatively cheap and worth buying if in fine condition.

Peking carpets are becoming famous all over the world. From a small native craft, the industry has grown to such proportions in the last few years that thousands of Chinese rugs are shipped annually to Europe and America. These modern carpets are made to order in any design and the makers copy Western patterns quite satisfactorily. But as they are all woven by hand—the curious process may be seen in any of the little shops outside the Hata Mên—and as the manufacturers are generally busy with orders, no work can be finished in a hurry for the passing traveller. The rugs are sold according to the number of threads to the foot, and prices have increased owing to the increased cost of wool. It is, however, worth while to pay for a good quality—at least between 100 and 200 threads to the foot—as thin loosely-woven carpets wear flat in a few months and fall into holes at the first beating. The camel's hair and yak-tail rugs, though attractive, have the disadvantage of a disagreeable caravan odour which remains for months and is overpowering in damp weather. Beware of choosing too complicated patterns, necessitating artificial dyes that fade. The good fast colours are made from Chinese vegetable dyes and the best wearing are the various shades of blue, buff, pink and brick red. Greens quickly deteriorate, and blacks grow rusty.

The few remaining old K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung carpets and Mongol prayer-rugs made of the inner wool of the Thibetan goat are now very expensive, but sometimes the best specimens resemble the Persian. They

may be distinguished by the sheen of the wool, the mellowing of the colours and by the cotton strands which turn a yellowish brown with age—a shade that cannot be duplicated by dyeing.

There is no more delightful way of spending an afternoon than pottering through “Blackwood Street” between the Ch’ien Mên and the Hata Mên in search of “Chinese Chippendale.” Here one may usually find some good second-hand pieces, cheaper than in the shops inside the city where the goods that have passed the gate pay an octroi duty. Real bargains are often picked up in the carpenters’ yards before they ever reach the merchants’ show rooms. But it requires some experience to judge of them before they have been polished or while they are undergoing repairs. A table that at first sight appears only fit for firewood may be in fact the precious *tzu-t’an*.

This is a kind of rose-wood, not ebony as many people think. It has a reddish tinge that darkens with age and exposure to light. Real old pieces are quite black and very heavy. The best are made from the part of the tree nearest the ground. The branches and upper trunk also yield a hard wood but of inferior quality. A little experience soon enables one to judge the grain and to distinguish it from that of the *hung-mu* or red wood, of which many fine cabinets, tables, chairs, benches and boxes are also made. Occasionally a nice specimen of camphor wood—usually in chests—walnut, or pear may be found, or the lovely brown *nan-mu*,

used not only for furniture but much sought after by rich Chinese for coffins.

The simpler forms of decoration, showing a due appreciation of the value of plain surfaces and allowing the full beauty of all these fine woods to appear, are infinitely more attractive than heavy carvings, riots of dragons and clouds, flame and flower designs, such as one finds on the vulgar, overburdened Cantonese blackwood. True "Chinese Chippendale," sedate and chaste like its Western counterpart, has the advantage of never looking out of place wherever one puts it in any surroundings.

In China we are often amazed to find the fingers of the humble craftsman inspired by the soul of an artist. Even common things used by everyday people are often admirable. "Common things!" Common, perhaps when compared to the treasures of other ages: common in the sense of being modern and universal, but curious to us Westerners, and positively thrilling when we first arrive.

Who can forget the delicious surprise of his first journey through Chinese streets, unable to make the rickshaw runner understand anything but gestures, frantic gestures to stop anywhere, everywhere, since all is unspeakably pleasureable and new. He must not pass by the wizen-faced vendor who has his wares laid out on the ground before him—such quaint sets of dominoes, and water pipes, and brass padlocks. Can he ever discover the row of little silver shops in side lanes where we are promised models of pagodas for salt cellars, and Peking carts, and wheel-barrows, and *p'ai lous* and

spider-web menu-holders, and spoons with enamelled handles? Can he take us to see the workers in kingfisher feathers which mount so prettily into combs and hair ornaments—and the native jeweller who stamps the name of his shop inside the soft gold or filigree ring or bracelet, thus binding himself, by guild law and custom, to buy it back at any time by weight, without questioning the quality of the material—and the cloisonné²⁴⁵ shops where they will copy any design we please—even coats of arms in heraldic colours? He must find the big bazaar that some one recommended as such a curious sight. Did they say outside the Ch'ien Mên? Yes, here it is exactly as described—the outer wall and gaily decorated gate, the little courtyard in front crammed full of carriages, the primitive fire engine with hand pumps in the corner. It could not throw a stream as far as the second story but it is surrounded by elaborate satin banners with invocations to the Fire God. That is the Chinese way—to put more faith in charms than in hoses.²⁴⁶

Inside, curiosities and dainty objects bewilder us by their very multitude—embroidered spectacle-cases that would almost reconcile one to being short-sighted, ladies' shoes for bound feet, enamelled buttons, silks, painted fish-bowls, snuff-bottles and embroidered sachets.

²⁴⁵ See Chapter VI, "Museum."

²⁴⁶ It is not uncommon to see charms against fire pasted on the walls of shops. Some have the character for Water enclosed in a circle and a note informing the Fire God that this place has already received the honour of his visit, the inference being that he keep away in future.

There are several temples to the Fire God in Peking (see Chapter X).

It is very distracting to see the Chinese ladies tottering on their "Golden Lilies", and the Manchu matrons in their flowered and gold-barred head-dress deliberating over stuffs for future finery, or choosing gew-gaws, while a rasping phonograph plays Chinese tunes for their edification. We stare unashamed at the men-servants and the maid-servants who accompany them, at the children asleep or breakfasting unconcernedly in the arms of their nurses—at the tea and cakes spread out before the whole party, for without tea no sale can be made in China and time is no object. It appears these ladies expect to spend several hours over their purchases as such an outing is one of their rare amusements.

We may look to our heart's content—at the purchasers or at the objects to be purchased. The shopkeepers do not urge us to buy. Because these bazaars or department stores are comparatively modern innovations in Peking, they pride themselves on their modern methods. They encourage the sight-seer, like the customer, for the sake of advertisement. When they do sell, they sell at "fixed prices"—"All same America," an attendant informs us proudly.

In all the other shops where foreigners buy, especially the curio shops,²⁴⁷ it is a safe rule to suppose that the dealer is asking from a quarter to two-thirds more than he hopes to receive. Offer a little less than half what is asked, then, as the merchant gradually comes down

²⁴⁷ Among the Chinese themselves, the tea, cake, rice and wine shops are one-price establishments.

in his price, increase very gradually until neutral ground is reached. Finally split the difference, and the bargain is yours. If one is in a hurry or shows any enthusiasm for the article in question, it is impossible to make a cheap purchase. Point out the defects in the piece under discussion and remember the old saying: "It is naught, it is naught", saith the buyer, "but when he hath gone his way then he boasteth." A good plan is to leave the shop when the owner, afraid of losing a customer, runs after you with a last offer—the lowest price, or nearly—that he is prepared to accept.

A Chinese curio-dealer does not expect a daily turnover. A few transactions in the year are enough, owing to the great profits in the business.

We have bargained for days or weeks for a certain thing, passing the shop often. "Not sold yet?" we inquire indifferently. "Not yet," says the shop-keeper with equal indifference. And while we boil with impatience to possess what we want and tremble lest someone else snap it up, he enjoys the bargaining almost as much as the sale. The Chinese in fact only appreciate you as a purchaser if you know how to drive a good bargain, whereas we impatient Westerners feel that the time wasted could be put to a far more useful purpose.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FUN OF THE FAIR.

PEKING is a city of a thousand activities and of many-fold industries. Yet we must not conclude from this that the Chinese care nothing for amusement. The poor clerk or artisan gets little enough of it because he has no leisure—no time of his own except the hours necessary for sleep. He must work steadily from early morning till late evening. He cannot afford to leave the shop or work bench, except on a rare holiday, night or day for months at a time. The luxury of festivities is not for him. Does not the proverb say: "A wise man seeks pleasure only when his rice bin is full," meaning, of course, only when his household is so well provided for that he can afford it? But the prosperous merchants and the rich officials amuse themselves constantly and spend money extravagantly in the tea shops, the theatres, and the restaurants of the Pleasure Quarter outside the Ch'ien Mên.

When play-houses were forbidden by Imperial decree inside the Tartar City, they sprang up just beyond the prescribed boundary, near the "Bridge of Heaven."²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ The T'ien Ch'iao, or "Bridge of Heaven," just outside the Ch'ien Mên, is the old marble bridge, lately repaired and transformed, that every visitor crosses on his way to the Temple of Heaven. It spans a canal neither fragrant nor clear, and used to be the haunt of repulsive beggars. Hence it came to be associated in the Chinese mind with thievery, beggary and moral corruption. To tell a Chinese to go to the "Bridge of Heaven" is the quintessence of abuse.

Soon the best restaurants, with façades so elaborate that we feel they should be put under glass as a protection against the dust, were established near by. Hotels opened in the same neighbourhood for the convenience of the wealthy stranger. Shops followed to tempt him, native pharmacies to cure him,²⁴⁹ bath houses²⁵⁰ to cleanse him. These formed the nucleus of the city's gaieties.

²⁴⁹ Here the most curious remedies still find purchasers among the conservative classes—powdered deer's horn and tiger's whiskers, ground fish-bones and oyster shells, dried bamboo juice and cicada skins, pounded fossils, and other things too horrible to mention. It was the general belief among the Chinese that almost anything weird was curative, and the larger the pill—some are as big as pigeon's eggs—the more efficacious. When drugs failed, the physician resorted to acupuncture. The manikins full of holes exposed in the pharmacist's window were used by doctors of the old school as charts to indicate where to drive their needle into a living patient without fatal results and often with astounding success. The model for these manikins was a famous bronze statue, dating from the Sung dynasty, enshrined in a temple to the God of Medicine on the site of the Russian Compound in the Diplomatic Quarter. After 1900 this statue was taken by a private collector—Prince Ukhtomsky—to St. Petersburg. Another curious aid to the physician, sometimes to be found in these shops, is a small bone or ivory figure of a naked woman. This was used when attending female patients who might not be seen or touched by a male doctor. It was passed by him between the bed curtains. The sick woman then marked the locality of her pain upon it and handed the figure back, whereupon her medical adviser prescribed accordingly.

²⁵⁰ They are distinguishable in the daytime by the basket used for drawing water, hung on top of a high pole, and at night by a red lantern hoisted as a signal that the water is hot. The better class establishments, for men only, are reasonably clean. Everybody, except the small minority able to afford a private room, bathes in one large sunken tub where the water is almost at boiling point and the atmosphere full of steam.

It is strange that all these haunts of the wealthy lie within a stone's throws of the worst slums of the capital. Long before the former open their doors, the side, sewery lanes a little to the east of them are filled to overflowing with a poverty more pitiful for its proximity to luxury. Before dawn the "Thieves' Market" is held here by torchlight. The "Flea Market" opens a little later. Wares are spread on the street itself, but they are generally of such a character that dirt and indiscriminate handling can do them no harm. Old bottles, broken door-knobs, bent nails lie side by side with frayed foreign collars, dilapidated tennis rackets, rusty corsets or even threadbare evening slippers that have been thrown into the waste basket of some European house and gathered up by the assiduous rag-pickers who classify the refuse of Peking for this fair. Old clothes' stalls abound, where men bargain fiercely for rags to cover their nakedness, and lodging houses where for one copper miserable tatterdemalions sleep on heaps of duck's feathers in evil-smelling hovels. The Abbé Huc describes one of these places and tells how, when customers stole the individual cotton quilts supplied as covering, some one devised a communal bedspread the size of the floor with holes for the sleepers' heads. It was raised and lowered by tackle, a gong sounding an alarm night and morning to warn the lodgers.

Let us turn from these melancholy sights—the poverty and misery which we find, alas! in every big city—to the Pleasure Quarter where the crowds are

beginning to gather. The Ch'ien Mên street is always interesting, day or night. To have hours before one and loiter along it from the gate, prepared to penetrate every inviting shop and explore every alluring by-street—is perpetual amusement. One sees the Chinese at their gayest and busiest, and the passing types are an endless study. Here comes a famous singing girl in a brass-trimmed rickshaw with half a dozen shining lamps and jangling bells. Many men are infatuated by her smile—men old enough to know better. In an expensive motor car, guarded by soldiers, sits a general who is a dictator in his own province. We recognise one of the Living Buddhas passing in his cart. Rumour says he is fond of the play. Yonder, in a carriage whose body is made of mirrors, two women are pointed out to us, neither young nor very beautiful, but experienced in the ways of men and confidants of many secrets. They could tell you, only they are too wise, all the gossip of the capital. That fat merchant entering a shop is the Chinese Lipton. His refined looking companion was lately in the Cabinet. And the slim youth with the grace and figure of a girl, that both stop to greet, is Mei Lang-fang, the popular actor, on his way to the theatre. So they pass, like the figures on a brilliantly set stage—merchants and ministers, soldiers and hetærae, players all whether in politics, drama, or emotions.

In olden times even emperors joined the gay throng, incognito. The Ming sovereign Cheng Têh liked nothing better than to visit the book-stalls of the adjacent Liu Li

Ch'ang and purchase stories and paintings of the kind to which the dissolute patricians of Peking have always been partial. That Ch'ien Lung more than once paid unofficial visits to a certain beautiful lady of the Pleasure Quarter is known, and T'ung Chih, the unworthy son of the empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi, frequently slipped out of the Palace through an opening specially cut in the wall. A eunuch's cart drawn by a fast pacing mule would await him here, and it became a matter of common gossip that the Son of Heaven was frequently mixed up in drunken and disreputable brawls and would return to his throne, even after he had attained his majority, long past the hour fixed for audiences.

Naturally the young Manchu princes were not slow to follow this bad example. The Ta Ago, son of the Boxer leader Prince Tuan, and for a short time heir to the throne, was more distinguished for his exploits outside the Ch'ien Mên than for his diligence inside the Palace. Quarrels in eating houses and theatres between the depraved young scions of nobility were of frequent occurrence, and the position of the Chief of the newly established Police Board, when dealing with members of the ruling clan, was by no means a happy one. They would brook no interference with their whims, though some of these were foolish and unworthy. Such, for instance, was their habit of amusing themselves by dressing up as beggars and parading the streets in this guise. "I remember particularly," says a Manchu official quoted by Backhouse and Bland in *Annals and Memoirs of the*

Court of Peking, "one occasion in the dog days of 1892. It was very hot and some friends had invited me to join them in an excursion to the kiosk and garden known as the 'Beautiful Autumn Hillock' just outside the gate of the Southern City.²⁵¹ This spot is shady and in the middle there is a pond where water lilies and rushes grow. Visitors can take their tea quietly at the open-air restaurant.

"At the next table to us sat a young man. His face was black as soot and he looked worn and ill-nourished. His queue was plaited round his head and he had inserted a bone hairpin in his hair after the manner of the Peking hooligan class in summer time. He wore no socks. Stripped to the waist, his only garment was a pair of very shabby short trousers which hardly reached to the knee, all covered with grease and mud: in fact he was scarcely decent.

"Strange to say this miserable looking beggar had on a thumb-ring of green jade worth at least 500 taels (at that time about £80), and he carried a beautiful and very costly fan with a jade handle. His conversation was full of vulgar oaths and the lowest Pekingese slang. I noticed, however, that the waiters showed him a very

²⁵¹ In the period of greatest heat, frequenters of the Pleasure Quarter often adjourn to such gardens in the early afternoon for a breath of cooler air. The Chiang Chia Fêng Yuan Chia Hua Yuan, outside the Hsi Chih Mên, the Ku Erh Yuan, between the Ch'ien Mên and the Shun Chih Mên and the Yi Ch'ang Hua Yuan, outside the P'ing Tse Mên, are among the best known and worth visiting, especially in the season of peonies.

particular and eager attention and hardly ever left his side. I was lost in bewilderment and wondering what it meant, when all of a sudden a smart official cart and a train of well-groomed attendants appeared. The servants approached the young beggar carrying a hat box and a bundle of clothes.

“ ‘Your Highness’ carriage is ready,’ they told him. ‘You have an engagement to dine at Prince Kung’s palace to-night. We ought to be starting.’ Thereupon the young blade got up, took a towel and washed his face. We were astonished at the transformation. The dirty black had been replaced by a delicate white complexion and, though thin, he had the distinctive features of the Manchu princes. The head waiter whispered to me as he drove off in his official robes : ‘That was Prince Tsai.’ I replied in amazement : ‘What does he mean by such behaviour?’ ‘Ah!’ said the man, ‘don’t you know the latest craze of our young princes in Peking?’ He then went on to tell me how Prince Chuang, Prince K’o, Prince Tuan, the *pei-lehs* Lien and Ying, Prince Ch’ing’s son Tsai Chen, and many others made a practice of adopting this guise, causing disturbances and street rows, as the police were afraid to touch them . . . I was horrified to hear this and said : ‘Surely this portent is evil to our Empire. Such things occurred just before the Sungs were finally defeated by the Mongols and also at the close of the T’ang dynasty. History is full of similar examples. Mark my words, China will be plunged in dire calamity before ten years have passed’.”

Eight years later the Boxer outbreak happened and most of the princes fell to tramping the streets not as sham, but as real beggars.

"It served them right. They should not have mocked at us," says Tanglefoot who gets his sobriquet from his habit of wrapping old sacking around his nether extremities. Tanglefoot is a real beggar by profession, and a philosopher under his rags. You will generally find him in the Pleasure Quarter running behind a rich man's carriage whining for alms. As the Chinese proverb says: "When the stomach is empty, pride is not strong." Or he will take up his stand outside a shop and make himself so offensive to eyes, ears and nose, that the owner, unable to stand him any longer, will give him something to go away. "Why does the merchant not call the police to remove you?" we inquire. Having passed him our odd coppers for many years, we have the privilege of frankness. "He wouldn't dare to do that," is the reply. "I may look ragged and of no account, but remember I belong to the Beggar's Guild. We have a very powerful organization with a 'king' and thousands of members. Even rich shopkeepers hesitate to offend us, lest one of us commit suicide in reprisal on his doorstep and thus involve him in serious trouble and suspicion. Now if you will excuse me," he adds with a courtly bow that shows he has been well brought up, "I must be going on to the Inn of Heavenly Happiness where several large banquets are taking place. Guests

when well fed and flushed with wine are most easily moved to enjoy the luxury of generosity." ²⁵²

As Chinese seldom entertain in their own houses, the expensive restaurants do a thriving trade among the richer classes. Men go there to play cards or "sparrows," to drink, smoke, discuss politics or lean over the verandahs to watch the crowd. "The pulse of the people," the Chinese say, rightly, "may be felt in the chatter of the balconies." But like the Scotchman visiting Paris, they "do na bring the wife." Custom forbids Chinese ladies to appear in such places with men, even their own husbands, and when a banquet is given, the only women present are singing girls—professional entertainers with no reputation to lose.

Do not imagine, however, that a Chinese feast is in any sense an orgy offensive to good taste. No, the Chinese are a sober and abstemious race, a race of high culture and of ancient civilization. When we were still

²⁵² You would find Tanglefoot a very intelligent person and well worth talking to. He can tell, when he pleases, the most remarkable stories, true stories of human nature. Some are very terrible, some would make you laugh, and some would make you think. Between himself and the other beggars there is a difference of gentle blood. He comes from a good family who were suddenly stricken by poverty before there was time for him to learn a trade. Now mendicancy is a recognised institution in China, and included in the regular list of profitable professions open to a poor young man entering life. Therefore he said: "Mother, I know there is but one thing now to do. Let me become a beggar." The mother wept silently. Thus he began his career, lucky in his ill-luck, since he succeeded so well that he never needed to resort to the pitiful mutilations—like putting out an eye or cutting off a hand—which are sometimes deliberately undertaken to excite pity. A valuable insight into the everyday life of the Chinese capital may be obtained from *Peking, A Social Survey*, by Sidney D. Gamble.

gorging off half-raw oxen, and drunken with seven day feasts of mead, they had already acquired one of the hall marks of real civilization—to take “a little” instead of “a lot.” Their wine cups hold perhaps two teaspoonfuls, their tea cups three, their pipes a few fleeting whiffs. Drunkenness is exceedingly rare though it does exist. But the actual quantity of native wine required to produce intoxication for any one bent on it is considerably less than ours because the liquor is taken in such small doses.

Economical in satisfying the appetite with a smaller quantity of food a Chinese banquet may be, but the restaurant does not permit it to be low in cost. The dinner “ready to serve” is unknown. Everything must be ordered in advance, though nothing is fully prepared till all the guests are assembled, and after what seems to us an interminable delay. A very elaborate menu may cost Mexican \$10 or even \$15 a plate, but a reasonably good meal may be had for \$2. The great difference in price, of course, represents rare delicacies, birds’ nests brought from the Southern Seas, shark’s fins out of season, early cucumbers from Canton or other imported vegetables of which the Chinese are very fond.²⁵³

²⁵³ A vegetarian restaurant is one of the novelties of the capital. Not only is every vegetable known to China prepared there, but these vegetables are served in imitation of practically every known meat dish. At a recent feast given in this place, 27 different varieties of Chinese food were served. The roast duck consisted of a preparation made from bean curd; fried eels were the rind of a certain kind of melon cooked in vegetable oils; vegetable, pork and beef courses were found to consist of bamboo shoots and mushrooms, and so on, the novelty of the entertainment being that the vegetables not only tasted like the various meat dishes but were moulded to look like them also.

First-class restaurants add to their profits by selling their leavings to second-class establishments, these again to third-rate places and so on *ad infinitum*. There is no waste in China, and the scraps that fall from the rich man's table may find their way at last to one of the open-air buffets at street corners where poor coolies pay a few cents for a bowl of rice with bean curd, or a portion of hashed camel or mule that has died of disease—where a small boy with a raucous voice shouts the equivalent of Mr. Bailey Junior's "The wittles is up" to attract his tattered customers, and pariah dogs prowl under the benches to snatch up anything that may fall from the counter.

After a fashionable Chinese dinner party the company break ranks with hiccups—considered good style as an expression of appreciation—loosen or discard outer garments, and seat themselves comfortably to enjoy whatever entertainment may be provided. Perhaps it will be singing girls whose piercing falsetto voices remind us of concerts we have heard on walls or roofs on moonlight nights. Perhaps it may be a band of blind musicians. They are ugly and their natural ugliness is often increased by the cruel attack of smallpox that destroyed their sight. But when they seat themselves and begin to play upon their quaint flutes and violins, a spell descends upon the company. Then from out of the ugly disfigured lips of the soloist there gushes a charming natural voice, deep, unutterably touching in its penetrating sweetness. No such voice has ever been heard from any singing girl, and

no such song. "Who may he be?" queries a bystander. "A peasant only, but a very, very great artist." Truly he "sings as only a peasant can sing, with vocal rhythms learned perhaps from the cicadae and the nightingales, and with fractions and semi-fractions, and demi-semi fractions of tones never written down in the musical language of the West." As he sings, those who listen grow serious, touched by the sad melody and the voice vibrant with all the sorrow and the sweetness and the patience of the blind—plaintively seeking for something forever denied. When the song is finished the singer, with the sensitiveness of the sightless, divines that his audience is pensive. He suddenly strikes his violin again and the strings, seemingly of their own volition, dance and quiver into the gayest, liveliest quickstep, into variations of foreign bugle calls which the player has picked up from the buglers of the Legation Guards, mingled with Chinese martial airs and imitations of street noises, squeaking barrows, crowing hens, crying children and quarrelling women, till the guests stare at each other in smiling amazement.

Again a host may choose to entertain his friends at the theatre, possibly at the Ti Yi Wu T'ai on the Chang Yi Mèn street, a fine building in semi-foreign style with seating accommodation for 10,000 people, and a great improvement on the older theatres which are often draughty, unattractive and dirty. Posters of red paper several feet long, pasted on the wall outside, announce what plays are going on. But in China there

is no need to hurry over dinner to catch the rising curtain, no danger of late comers being shut out until the next act. The performances last half the day and most of the night, sometimes, in the case of a series of popular historical or mythological plays, even three or four days—and the audience is continually coming and going. Nobody thinks of keeping silent: in fact, discussions are held constantly by convivial parties who sit around tables either in the pit or the wide galleries, eating sweetmeats and drinking tea. Nobody appears to listen to the actors shrieking themselves hoarse, but a fine feat of acrobatics or a graceful posture never fails to elicit shouts of "Hao, hao!" (good, good) and the approving gesture of upturned thumbs, reminiscent of the same gesture in Roman amphitheatres.

Scenery is scarce or merely suggestive, and the stage generally appears bare and unadorned, much as ours did in Shakespeare's time. To compensate, the costumes are wonderful and the head-dresses, decorated with pheasant feathers, mirrors and wired silk pompoms, very gorgeous. The actors are always men, or young boys for the female rôles.²⁵⁴ The tragedians strike us as ridiculous. Imagine painted warriors, with deep purple or white circles like goggles round their eyes, entering with an artificial strut

²⁵⁴ Men and women never act together in the same play, as the Chinese consider it indecent. A few companies composed exclusively of women and having their own theatres exist but they are considered second class by native spectators. A short sketch of the Chinese theatre and its history may be found in *Chinese Dramatic Art*, by R. F. Johnston.

that would shame a peacock, yelling at each other in high pitched voices, then waving their arms, striding to and fro across the boards and in desperate moments turning somersaults, with a property man behind each to rearrange his robes afterwards, while the drums and cymbals of the band bang violently every few moments. But the comedians are often really amusing, bringing out clever puns and repartees, rather highly spiced for our taste.

A third variety of theatrical representation, combining the best elements of both tragedy and comedy with remarkable scenic effects and costumes worthy of the Russian ballet, is being developed by that remarkable interpreter of female rôles, Mei Lang-fang. His popular plays, or pantomimes we might call them, since mimicry and graceful gesture are more important than plot or language²⁵⁵ arouse the enthusiastic admiration of Chinese and foreigners alike and would undoubtedly cause a sensation even in Europe or America.

²⁵⁵ The following short synopsis of one of these pantomimes, the T'ien Nu San Hua ("The Girl of Heaven Strews Flowers"), may be of interest as typical of these posture-plays whose skeleton plots are embellished by the gorgeous colour and costume effects of Mei Lang-fang and his own company of actors.

"Hermit Wei Mo was ill. Sakyamuni, the Buddhist ancestor, gave T'ien Nu (the Girl From Heaven) instructions to go to the hut of the holy man and strew upon his body the flowers of Heaven. Orders were also given that the disciples of Sakyamuni should proceed before her to inquire after the Hermit's illness. Upon her arrival T'ien Nu did as instructed and strewed the flowers in the air. The flowers fell on all alike but remained clinging to the persons of those who were not holy, while they fell from the bodies of those who were pure in heart."

Beyond the Ti Yi Wu T'ai, the Pleasure Quarter is spreading in the direction of the Temple of Agriculture. New restaurants have sprung up, and an Amusement Palace called the "New World" (modelled on the one in Shanghai) with roof gardens, cafés and vaudeville shows has lately been opened. The price of admission is significant. Only 20 cents. Yet even at this figure the promoters are likely to make money, so great is the swarm of visitors.

The poorest people, to whom even this seems a large sum, seek their amusements in the open space between the T'ien T'an and the Hsien Nung T'an. Here are mat-shed theatres, stilt walkers, acrobats and story-tellers similar to the Italian "improvisatore" but with more fire.²⁵⁶ Here are open tea-stalls with *samovars* heated by balls of coal dust and damp clay. Here are peddlers selling big yellow slabs of cake with plums stuck in them. A pleasant odour rises from roasting chestnuts in open cauldrons. Millions of flies buzz round a travelling butcher's barrow so thickly you cannot see the mutton for the flies, but the Chinese do not seem to mind. Whole families will take their evening meal alongside from one of these travelling kitchens, which a ragged coolie carries, stove and all, by a bamboo pole slung over his shoulder. He provides a rough bowl, a pair of

²⁵⁶ These men are immensely nimble of breath and full of slang expressions and witticisms to draw a laugh from the crowd. Often they work themselves up into a perfect frenzy, gesticulating till the sweat pours down their faces. Then at the psychological moment they refuse to go on with the story till they have taken up a collection.

chopsticks and a bone ladle, and his menu will consist of soups, coarse macaroni, strips of cabbage sizzling in frying fat, or sweet potatoes sputtering in dishes of hot bubbling syrup. These he advertises with a musical cry : "One copper cent for a big hot potato. Warm your hands with it first and eat it afterwards."

Beyond these primitive pleasure-haunts is a riding course much patronised by horse-dealers and gentlemen jockeys who show off their pacing ponies before the admiring crowd. Their mounts, specially brought from Mongolia, are worth much more than a good trotter would fetch. The Chinese do not care for the latter and indeed their high saddles, ridden with exceedingly short stirrups, are less comfortable at this pace. It is a pretty sight when these miniature horses, with brass-studded harness and bits of bright cloth braided into manes and tails, come down the straight at full tilt, singlefooting as fast as the ordinary pony can gallop, while the rider stands sideways in his stirrups, and the crowd applauds vociferously.

Near by, in sunny open space, the bird fancier may be seen taking his singing thrush for an airing. This is considered a most dignified pastime for a Chinese gentleman, besides being a necessity for the health and happiness of the pet. Many varieties of feathered singers, such as larks and "Flowering Eye-Browed Thrushes," mope and refuse to sing unless taken out regularly and their cages swung gently to and fro. Others must be set at liberty and fed with berries thrown

into the air. We may sneer at the pastime as an amusement for grown men. But after all it argues a refined and poetic trait in the national character, and the tiny feathered creatures chirping in their cages or flying with grace and fearlessness to alight on the hand or the forked twig held out for them, are very pretty and amusing.

Like the Frenchman, the Chinese is a born *boulevardier*. He loves a crowd and he delights in an excursion to some public park where he can stand about in leisurely dignity, sunning himself in indolent attitudes. Almost every fine afternoon streams of carriages and rickshaws filled with well-to-do pleasure seekers, wend their way to the Botanical and Zoological gardens outside the Hsi Chih Mên. This resort was founded by an official of the Department of Agriculture as an Experimental Station. There are several hot-houses where many varieties of flowers are cultivated, and a menagerie started by the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi with the wild animals presented to her, but most of the latter, having died, are now in the museum—stuffed. The grounds are spacious and well kept, with pretty lakes and pleasure boats for hire and dainty tea-houses overhanging lotus ponds. Sometimes the water is hidden by the large plants which stretch like a silvery green lawn right up to the balconies. So broad, so strong the great leaves hang like unsteady giants on their stalks, and the pin-points of dew or rain gather on the hairy surface, till the leaf curls to a cup and a big drop of quicksilver runs gleaming over the green. Amid the leaves, lying lazily

at angles of rest, the flowers seem to rise on their stalks as birds taking wing. All pure white or palest pink, each single blossom is a giant's handful, a great cup standing stately with pure gold in its heart. It combines luxuriance and grace just to the point where really more of either would be less of both.

The visitor who wishes to see Chinese Peking society at its best and brightest should visit these gardens or the Central Park in the Imperial City between five and seven o'clock of a summer evening. Perhaps the Central Park, being more accessible, is even gayer with its old stone benches under the trees of what used to be Palace gardens, till they were set aside for public recreation, and its flower beds enlivened by booths and restaurants, its artificial hills, its *kangs* filled with wonderful gold fish. The crowds that patronize all these attractions are extremely well dressed, decorous, intelligent, and are interesting as representatives of the best classes of residents in the capital.

In olden times, when neither of these resorts existed, the people's only out-of-door distractions were the temple fairs. The habit of holding such fairs dates from great antiquity and has the highest patronage. To mention but one instance, Ch'ien Lung used to have booths erected at the New Year along the main road of his Summer Palace for the amusement of the Court. There were curio stalls, embroidery shops and exhibitions of pictures in charge of eunuchs, the articles for sale being supplied by the large establishments in Peking under arrangements made by

the supervisor of the Octroi who selected what goods should be sent. Everything was done just as at a real market fair. Even peddlers and hawkers were allowed to come and ply their trades, and waiters and attendants were brought from the chief restaurants of the city to serve *al fresco* meals. As His Majesty passed through the bazaar, the waiters would shout the menus for the day, the hawkers would cry their goods and the clerks would be busy calling out the figures which they were entering in the books. The bustle and animation delighted the Emperor and his guests, the high officials and their wives invited to make purchases. It continued daily till the end of the first moon when the stalls were taken down.²⁵⁷

The most picturesque public fair was that formerly held, until the Siege, in the Mongol Market, just outside the walls of the British Legation.²⁵⁸ Here Mongol traders offered for sale war trumpets, buddhas, prayer wheels, tea-pots and rough silverware inlaid with turquoises. The crowd was always interesting with its curious intermingling of racial types. No stranger could help staring at the women of the steppes with their stiff padded epaulettes and long plaits of hair braided with strings of coral and semi-precious stones. No shrewd Chinese merchant could help swindling their genial but

²⁵⁷ The Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi revived this picturesque custom at the new Summer Palace during the period (before the *coup d'état* of 1898) of her retirement from state affairs.

²⁵⁸ See Chapter III.

stupid spouses, squat and almost square in their sheepskin-lined clothes and felt riding boots. The Mongol men have ever been to the Pekingese what the Auvergnats are to the *gamins* of Paris, or the country bumpkins come to London for the cattle-show to the cockney cabbies—the butt of popular jokes, invariably cheated wherever they go.

Of the quaint fairs that still continue, the best known and the most frequented are the Lung Fu Ssŭ, the Hu Kuo Ssŭ and the Liu Li Ch'ang. The Lung Fu Ssŭ is held three times a month—on the 9th and 10th, 19th and 20th, and 29th and 30th of the Chinese calendar, in the courts of a dilapidated Ming temple near the “Eastern Four *Pai lous*.” The “Eternal Happiness” monastery, from which it takes its name, was built at great expense in 1451, and its five fine sanctuaries were served by Lama priests. Under the reign of Yung Cheng the fair was inaugurated to celebrate the temple festival and it has been continued ever since, even after the disastrous fire in 1901 which destroyed the grandeur of the establishment.

Cheap wares of all kinds are sold here. At the outer gate one is besieged by men with Pekingese puppies. Some of them look like imitation dogs. They ought to have green wheels and red flannel tongues.

Within, modern brasses and trays, or odds and ends of curios are spread out on the ground or on stalls. One corner of the large court is given over to the sellers of crickets in bamboo cages and gold fish—beautiful creatures with triple and quadruple tails. We should like

to buy them all and put them in big bowls with clear water. But the "boy" explains that if we did, they would die; they like the murky liquid to which they are accustomed.

A whole row of artificial flower stands are crowded with Manchu women in search of hair ornaments. It is fascinating to watch them with their slender, fine, faultlessly knit figures, with just that suggestion of pliant elegance which the sight of a young bamboo gives when the wind is blowing.²⁵⁹

We follow the crowd to the inner courtyard. More stalls here; stalls where false hair is sold in long tresses, stalls with red ceremonial candles boxed in pairs for weddings, comb stalls, stalls with dozens of tiny but unusually sharp knives used for shaving cheeks, nose, brows and chin, with bamboo back-scratchers shaped like tiny hands, stalls that sell ribbons to wind about the ankles and keep the trousers in place, stalls innumerable for every native requirement.

In the midst of them are booths with steaming food where weary shoppers stop to rest and ply their chopsticks in the open air. The money-changer sits beside them with lines of cash in grooved wooden trays before him. The seal-cutter has established himself not far off. The herb-seller has chosen a corner where his wares will not be trampled on. A venerable old man near by has a stock of a few dozen teeth, neatly extracted, sound, and ready

²⁵⁹ See Chapter IV.

for customers. The fortune-teller and chooser of lucky days is also there to be consulted. He has a bamboo tube with sticks of various lengths. First he shakes this and then the questioner draws a stick. Is it long? That means luck. No, alas! it is a short one. Pass on please and try again another day. The sound of the little gong with which he advertises his presence brings back a childish verse :

“Elijah was a prophet who attended country fairs,
And advertised his business by a troupe of dancing bears.”

Even a prophet, you see, will never get credit for prophecy unless he tells people he is one somehow.

The spectacle mender, the razor grinder, and the cheap jeweller, all are present plying their trades as busily as if they were in their own shops. The cloth auctioneer must be positively irresistible to the native matrons as he pulls his calico to show its strength while singing its praises in rhyme :

“Ten cents, ten,
Or a bit more.
Here you have a stuff never seen before.
Only ten a foot, strong and handsome too,
Here's what you want. Just the thing for you.”

The words of his chant might be partly rendered by this free translation. But the gestures, the voice tones, the cadence is inimitable.

We tear ourselves away from his amusing pantomime. What could we do with the hideous flowered percale he holds out so invitingly? There is perhaps too little merit in resisting it.

But we fall shamefully when we get as far as the toy stalls. Every foreigner is struck by the astonishing ingenuity by which Chinese toy-makers are able to reach, at a cost too small to name, almost the same results as our expensive toys. Poverty ages ago taught them the secret of making pleasure the commonest instead of the costliest of experiences—the divine art of creating the beautiful out of nothing. A group of little paper figures standing on horse hairs are made to dance on a brass tray by a light tap on the edge, the whole delightful contrivance costing only a few cents. A flock of geese will fly up and down a thread by loosening or tightening the bent bamboo attached to it—all for a farthing. Butterflies of paper flutter on light osier twigs. Artificial blossoms attached to real branches deceive the eye. Always the cheapest materials are used—paper, bamboo, straw, clay, or bits of wood, or feathers. But whether the doll's furniture, so cleverly copied on Chinese Chippendale models, be made of scraps of old cigar-boxes, or the insects of dried mud, or the pink-cheeked goddesses of sugar, or the weird, mythical animals of painted cloth, or the figurines, as pleasing in their way as those of Tanagra, of clay, each thing is so cleverly done—so expressive, often so humorous—that one is forced to buy.

The Hu Kuo Ssü fair, second in importance to the one held at Lung Fu Ssü, also takes place three times a month (on the 7th and 8th, 17th and 18th and 27th and 28th days of the Chinese calendar) in a Lama temple

designated for this purpose by Kublai Khan. Thibetan Living Buddhas used to reside here under the Mings, but it is now in ruins. The fair held in the courtyards is for the supply of the ordinary household needs of the simple folk: brooms, feather dusters, scissors, spoons, peanuts heaped up in little piles, the frailest of toys, the cheapest of glass jewellery. The street leading to the temple is filled with flower shops. One at least dates from Ming times ²⁶⁰ and the dealer shows with pride two historic palms dating from this dynasty, of a variety known to the Chinese as the *T'ieh Shu* ("iron tree"). They flower only once in a century or more and, according to the records kept by his family, they have blossomed but twice since the advent of the Manchus. The foreign visitor will be interested in inspecting the winter plant houses of wattle and dab, with mud walls on three sides and mud roofs and thick white paper pasted over the skeleton poles of the southern exposure. They make warm, dry shelters for the palms and flowers, keeping them at a safe and even temperature through the bright but bitter winter season. Some of these hot-houses have underground flues that force the plants appropriate to the New Year to bloom on time. If the festal blossoms lag behind in the last week of grace,

²⁶⁰ Several firms in Peking boast of equally ancient beginnings, for example the T'ung Jen T'ang Pharmacy in the Ta Sha La'rh outside the Ch'ien Mên. This establishment still uses the now priceless Ming jars of its first days to hold the newest medicines from Europe and America, offered for sale side by side with native medicaments.

cauldrons of boiling water furnish clouds of gentle steam-heat that open the most obstinate peonies, and gild the fruits of the dwarf orange trees and the curious "Buddha's Fingers"—a symbolic fruit of the lemon family shaped like a hand. All these favourite New Year gifts for friends are then packed in paper-lined baskets, warmed with hand braziers and thus snugly protected from frost which would otherwise wither them in an instant, and are transported to the home of the purchaser to add to the decoration of house or shop at this joyous season.

In Peking, and indeed all over China, the New Year (according to the Lunar calendar) is a time of universal rejoicing—the one holiday lasting several weeks, the one occasion of unbounded festivity and hilarity, as if the whole population threw off the old year with a shout, and clothed itself in the new with a change of garments. It is celebrated by the most famous of all Peking fairs held at the Liu Li Ch'ang.

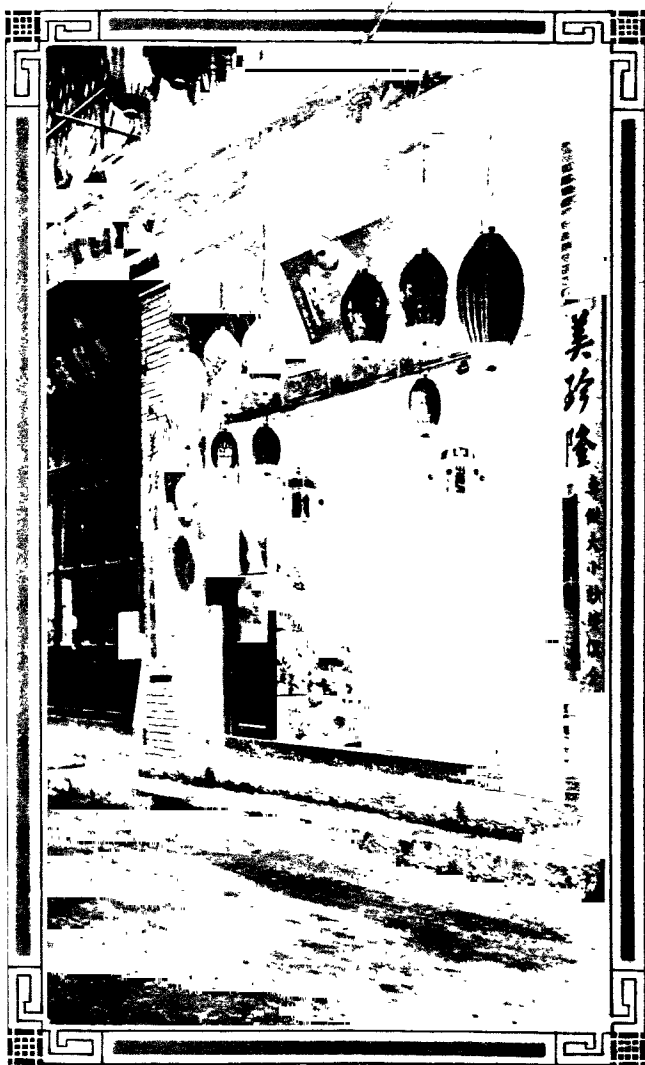
Let us go by all means if we have a chance. The "boy" says we must pass through Lantern Street, though it is a round-about way just to see the crowds. Very well. Our rickshaws hardly move faster than a walk because the traffic is so great. But we do not complain, for the streets have the effect of an infinitely diverting theatrical performance, and a slow pace gives us better opportunities to look at the shops thronged with purchasers. Everybody buys a lantern for the festival and the choice is positively bewildering. Some are large, of horn or gauze, painted with characters signifying lucky

wishes, or with the owner's name. Some are of paper and some of silk mounted in carved wood, and some have curious shapes of birds, or crabs, or figures of jointed beetles and bumblebees. These are very cheap, really nothing but toys since they give no light. But nowadays with improved street lighting and the universal habit of oil lamps, the lantern is not so much a necessity as a decorative adjunct to Chinese life.²⁶¹

A little further and we find ourselves in the thick of Booksellers Street, the great resort of the *literati* who spend hours, much as their European colleagues do in Paris at the little stalls along the Seine, searching for treasures, old books, rubbings of famous inscriptions, scroll pictures. There are poems mounted upon silk which are wonders of calligraphy. And there are charming landscapes—glimpses of snow-covered mountains, rice-fields with birds darting over the grain, trees crimsoning over tremendous gorges, ranks of peaks hung with clouds, —exposed along an old wall and none the less charming because frankly modern and costing from one dollar to 20.

The outdoor fair with the usual booths of all kinds, quacks, mountebanks, jugglers and puppet shows, is held in a large open space bounded by fine wide roads newly opened up. But in a narrow lane leading off from it is the old temple of the Fire god where pearls, jades and porcelains are for sale. Here is temptation personified. And what a

²⁶¹ In bygone days lanterns were carried by all classes. Even sentries used them when on duty.



SHOP IN LANTERN STREET

crowd! At first it seems impossible for anybody to move in it. Nevertheless all are moving or rather circulating from stall to stall. "There is a general gliding and slipping as of fish in a shoal, but with patience and good humour one finds no difficulty in getting through the apparently solid press of heads and shoulders."

We notice that prices are absurdly high until the last day of the fair—in fact, prohibitive. But it appears the merchants hardly expect to sell. Things are really placed here on exhibition to attract the attention of buyers who will later go to the shops to bargain in private for what they have seen and admired. Nevertheless, even to look at such things as are exposed is an education.

Outside in the street the poorer classes spend their coppers at the fruit stalls where mounds of white Peking pears, large purple grapes that the Chinese know how to keep for a year by burying them underground in pottery jars on an ancient cold storage system, rosy cheeked apples, orange persimmons, show bright spots of colour. Dear to the children is the crab-apple man with the great broom on his shoulder, every straw stick strung with little red apples preserved in honey. His recipe came originally from the Mongols who wear these fruits, preserved in this way, strung on strings around their necks, and often take a bite from their necklace as they ride or bargain. It was in fact the Mongols who developed the sweet tooth of Asia, carrying their love of sugared dainties with them in their conquests and passing it on to the Turks, the Persians and all the peoples of the Orient, so that by their

sweets one may still trace the path of the once-powerful Khans. The famous sweetmeat shops of the Liu Li Ch'ang made their reputation by improving on the original recipes, and they put up not one but a hundred varieties of delicious preserves in green glazed jars for eager customers.

The two favourite dissipations of the Pekingese, as some one justly remarks, are sweets and fire crackers. As we return, crackers are flashing all around us celebrating the end of the happy holiday. It has all passed like a pleasant dream. And now the little plum trees, gifts of felicitations in every house, are losing their flowers. Another year of toil must pass before they bloom again. But the joyous spirit of the feast still seems to haunt the guest rooms. Perhaps it is only the perfume of pleasures so rare for the busy, toiling multitude in the East, perhaps an ancestral memory, some Lady of Past New Years who follows their steps all viewlessly to the threshold and lingers with them awhile "for the sake of Auld Lang Syne."

CHAPTER XX.

WESTERN LANDMARKS.

HERE and there in the native city or the suburbs some Western landmark, a church or chapel, a school or hospital, inscribed in French or English, or a cemetery marked with a cross, offers a striking contrast to its Far Eastern environment. These belong to various Christian Missions, and serve to remind us of the most romantic chapter in the history of foreign relations with China and the extraordinary part played by missionaries in early days.

Setting aside the dim legend that St. Thomas, the doubting Apostle, was the first to preach the Gospel to the Chinese, it is certain that Christian teachers did visit them in very remote ages.²⁶² The first, probably, were Manichæan teachers. Two Nestorian monks carried silkworm's eggs to Justinian in the sixth century, and their order had been proselytising in China, since the reign of the great T'ai Tsung,²⁶³ several hundred years before the

²⁶² The birth of Christ is recorded in the Chinese chronicles as having taken place in the reign of Hsiao P'ing Ti (Han dynasty), on the fourth day of the "Tung Chih festival," in "Têh-ya"—(Judea).

²⁶³ See "Fa Yuan Ssü," footnote, Chapter XI.

arrival of the first papal embassy. The Nestorians were an important community in Peking as late as the fourteenth century, and their last remains were reported to Ricci to have been wiped out in North China by a persecution about A.D. 1540.²⁶⁴ But while their influence lasted, they were powerful enough to prevent the permanent establishment of any other Christian sect.

John of Montecorvino, sent by Pope Nicholas IV in the thirteenth century to the Court of Kublai Khan, is the first of the Roman Catholic fathers to thrill our imaginations.²⁶⁵ We read how he was kindly received at Khanbalyk (ancient Peking), where he remained, as he says so affectingly, "12 long years without any news from Europe"; how he built a church "which had a steeple and belfry with three bells that were rung every hour to summon the new converts to prayer"; how he baptised nearly 3,000 persons and "bought 150 children

²⁶⁴ Yule-Cordier, *Cathay and the Way Thither*.

²⁶⁵ "Before the said Archbishop came to the empire of the great Khan, no Christian of whatever sort or nation he might be, managed to be able to build however small an oratory or set up the sign of Christ, because of the power of the Nestorians who forbade it . . . But after Brother John (Montecorvino) came, he built, God helping him, several churches in spite of the Nestorians. And other Christian nations who hate the schismatic Nestorians, have followed, and especially the Armenians who are now building themselves a remarkable Church which they mean to give to him" (Extract from a letter of Brother Peregrine, translated by A. C. Moule in the *New China Review*, 1920).

whom he instructed in Greek and Latin, composing for them several devotional books"; and how, after an "outward life that was good, and hard, and rough," when he died in 1328 as Archbishop of the Chinese Diocese, more than 40 years an exile from his home, the whole city mourned for him, Christian and heathen alike rending their garments and making pilgrimages to his tomb.

Doubtless much of his success was due to the complete toleration of the Khans towards all religions.²⁶⁶ Mangu, the predecessor of Kublai, defined their attitude when he said: "We Tartars recognise one God at whose beck we live and die, and to whom our hearts are always converted. But just as God has given us several fingers on our hands, so has he granted to men many ways leading to celestial bliss." For others, less tolerant than himself, this sovereign arranged a field day when the Nestorians, Catholics, Mohammedans, Taoists and Buddhists were invited to appear and settle their disputes. Rubruquis, a Dutch priest sent out by the French King St. Louis, was the victorious champion of the first two bouts, but at a later one held in 1256, in the absence of the doughty Christian pleader, Mangu decided for Buddhism, "the thumb," as against Christianity, Mohammedanism and Taoism which he styled mere "fingers"—and this despite the fact that his own mother, as Friar

²⁶⁶ "In the quarters of the infidels," says the same letter, written in 1317, "we can preach freely, and we have preached several times in the Saracens' mosque for their conversion."

Odoric, who visited Karakorum in search of Prester John, attests, was a Christian.²⁶⁷

Later, the teaching of the Gospel in China was discontinued for many years. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the Jesuits began to exercise an influence which very nearly overwhelmed all their rivals. St. Francis Xavier had marked China as the field of his special labours. He himself, however, never succeeded in reaching that country, "for when once his destination became known, the formidable wheels of opposition were set in motion by the Portuguese . . . whose traders were from the start inimical to all missionary work, foreseeing danger to their business if any collision with the Imperial authorities should result from it."²⁶⁸ St. Francis died in 1552 of fever near Macao without personally realising his dream. His mantle fell upon a worthy successor in Father Ricci, to whom, when he reached Peking after overcoming a thousand difficulties, the Ming Emperor Wan Li showed special favour.

The Order continued to hold its high position in the early days of Manchu rule owing to the pre-eminent abilities of another great leader, Father Schall, who enjoyed even more consideration under the Manchu Emperor Shun Chih than under the last Mings, receiving

²⁶⁷ For a full description of Mangu Khan's religious tournaments see the account, bristling with unconscious humour, of Brother Rubruquis himself. *The Journey of William of Rubruck to Eastern Parts of the World* 1253-1255. Translated by W. W. Rockhill.

²⁶⁸ "A Study of Roman Catholic Missions in China," by Hollis W. Hering, *New China Review*, 1921.

the appointment of Tutor to the Heir Apparent and a free gift of the site of the house near the Shun Chih Mên, where Ricci had lived, for a church.²⁶⁹ On this land the Nan T'ang, or Southern Cathedral, was built in 1650.²⁷⁰ These honours excited the jealousy of the Chinese officials, as Schall warned Shun Chih they would, and when this Emperor died, the famous missionary was thrown into prison together with his companion, Verbiest. For six long years they suffered the horrors of a Chinese gaol! Finally the four Regents, into whose hands the administration had fallen after Shun Chih's death, incurred the displeasure of the youthful heir (K'ang Hsi) by their harsh treatment of these Roman Catholic priests, towards whom his father had shown himself well and kindly disposed. In fact, it was largely due to their persecution of his old tutor that in 1667 the young Monarch dismissed them and assumed control of the Government at the age of 13.

²⁶⁹ Shun Chih himself, "though deeply interested in religion as such, was no fanatic, as is shown by his friendly attitude towards the Catholic missionaries who lived in his capital and attended his Court. We have it on their authority that he listened with patience and interest to the story of Christ and wept at the recital of the tragedy of Gethsemane and Calvary. That he himself possessed something of the missionary spirit is shown by his own charming account of how he converted his beloved Tung Kuei-fei from scepticism or indifference to a religious faith as deep and fervid as his own." "The Romance of an Emperor," by R. F. Johnston. *New China Review*, 1920.

²⁷⁰ Gloriously associated with the names of Ricci, Schall and Verbiest, decorated with handsome statues imported from Europe and paintings done by the skilful brush of Castiglione, the Nan T'ang as a place of worship survived the recalling of the Jesuits and the expulsion of the Lazarists, only to be burned by the Boxers during the fanatical outbreak of 1900.

K'ang Hsi honoured the Jesuits in every way, accorded them official rank and consideration at Court, built them dwelling houses and a church—the original Pei T'ang Cathedral, actually within the Palace enclosure, on ground given in 1693 as a reward for His Majesty's cure from a fever by quinine, or "Jesuits' bark" (then new in Europe), administered to him by Fathers Gerbillon and Visdelou.²⁷¹

In return, the scientific knowledge of these savants was at the disposal of the Emperor, and very useful it was to him too. Verbiest corrected the crooked calculations of the native astronomers. Gerbillon, his successor, was sent by K'ang Hsi to Russia to help the conclusion of the Nerchinsk Treaty, and, as a reward, the Emperor published, on March 22nd, 1692, his great "Edict of Tolerance," permitting Christianity to be preached freely throughout the Empire.²⁷² Schall reformed the calendar and cast cannon which, "with much ceremony and robed as for mass, he blessed in the presence of the Court, sprinkling them with holy water and giving to each the name of a female saint which he had himself drawn on the breech." Other Fathers surveyed and mapped the Empire, personally engraving the plates.

²⁷¹ "Les Missionnaires Européens sont admis à chaque grande cérémonie, où ils ont leur rang. L'Empereur leur a fait souvent l'honneur de leur adresser la parole et de leur dire des choses pleines de bonté, à la face, pour ainsi dire, de tout l'Empire," *Mémoires Concernant les Chinois, par les Missionnaires de Pékin*. Paris, 1776-1791.

²⁷² See H. W. Hering, *A Study of Roman Catholic Missions in China*.

This was undoubtedly the golden age of the Jesuits in Peking. They had three churches in the city, besides a church for women, which the ladies of the capital were especially zealous in ornamenting with their jewels. It is doubtful, though, whether this church had much influence, since Ripa tells us that it was only open once in six months, yet that it was allowed in the capital at all is significant.

“The story of Ricci, Schall, Verbiest and their companions,” says Freeman-Mitford,²⁷³ “teaches one great truth too often ignored nowadays. If missionaries are to be successful in China, it must be by the power of masterly talent and knowledge. They can only work on any scale through the lettered classes, and in order to dominate them must be able to give proof of superior attainments as the old Jesuits did . . . With courage, devotion, self-sacrifice our [Anglo-Saxon and Protestant] missionaries are largely endowed. They have given proofs of these even to the laying down of their lives, but these qualities are as nothing in the eyes of the cultivated Confucian. One such convert as Schall’s friend, the Prime Minister Sü, or his daughter, the saintly Candida, would do more towards christianising China than thousands of poor peasants. To make such converts, however, needs qualifications which are rare indeed. Above all things an accurate and scholarly knowledge of the language is necessary. There have been not a few

²⁷³ See *The Attaché at Peking*.

excellent scholars among our missionaries. But there are many more whose ignorance has been fatal, covering themselves and the religion they preach with ridicule. Fancy a Chinese Buddhist mounting on the roof of a hansom cab at Charing Cross and preaching Buddhism to the mob in pidgin English! That would give some measure of the effect produced on a Chinese crowd by a missionary whom I have seen perched upon a cart outside the great gate of the Tartar City at Peking, haranguing a yellow mob of gapers in bastard Chinese delivered with a strong Aberdeen accent. The Jesuits knew better than that." In fact the Jesuits, when they found the Chinese hostile to their missionary efforts, fell back on Western scientific knowledge to overcome this opposition. "It was," says Hering, "by their high scholarship that the great leaders—Ricci, Schall, Verbiest—worked their way literally step by step to the capital, and there entrenched themselves."

How well their methods of elevating and purifying the minds of men, and turning their thoughts to God by a knowledge of His marvellous works, succeeded, is patent to all. The Emperor's mother, wife and half the Court were baptised Christians, and K'ang Hsi only hesitated himself because of the cult of his ancestors. Therein lay the difficulty. It would never have proved insuperable if these tolerant, sensible, far-seeing Jesuits had been left alone or sustained by an intelligent Pope during the enlightened reign of K'ang Hsi. But when they urged the Pope to recognise the Imperial ancestors and thus do

away with the one obstacle to the Emperor's conversion, meddling and envious Dominicans and Franciscans reported to Rome that the Jesuits were sanctioning heathen customs²⁷⁴ and leading lives of pomp and worldly splendour. Thereupon the Pope sent legates to make inquiries and, naturally, trouble with the Jesuits, and K'ang Hsi, resenting this interference and wearied with the bickerings of the new priests, would have nothing more to do with their religion or its teachers after Clement XI. launched his bull supporting the Dominican contentions and denouncing ancestor worship as a heathen practice.²⁷⁵ "K'ang Hsi had no intention of sacrificing the peace of his Kingdom to Christianity."

The opportunity slipped by, never to return, and the golden age of Jesuit influence in China passed with the

²⁷⁴ What would these protagonists of Christian purism have said of the fact, proved by scholars, that St. Josaph, or the Holy Prince Josaphat (canonised by the early Christian Church on the testimony of St. John Damascene), whose very name is a corruption of the word "Bodhisatva" and whose feast in the Roman Catholic calendar is on the 27th of November,—corresponded in life to Sakyamuni Buddha? (See Yule-Cordier, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, 3rd ed.)

²⁷⁵ "The East has been tolerant of all creeds that do not assault the foundations of its society, and if Western Missions had been wise enough to leave these foundations alone—to deal with the Ancestor Cult as Buddhism did, and to show the same spirit of tolerance in other directions, the introduction of Christianity on a very extensive scale should have proved an easy matter. That the result would have been a Christianity differing considerably from Western Christianity is obvious . . . but the essentials of the doctrine might have been widely propagated without exciting antagonism. . . . To demand of a [Chinese] that he cast away or destroy his ancestral tablets is not less irrational and inhuman than it would be to demand of an Englishman or a Frenchman that he destroy his mother's tombstone in proof of his devotion to Christianity."—Lafcadio Hearn.

passing of their greatest men and the remarkable sovereign they served.

Yung Cheng, successor of K'ang Hsi, was an ardent Buddhist, in spite of the fact that in his youth he had a priestly preceptor, Father Pedrini, of whom he was very fond.²⁷⁶ Intending to make it quite plain that he was master in his own Empire, and resenting the interference of some of the Jesuits in his bickerings with his brothers, he wrote several direct "orders" to the Pope, abolished the Court rank of Roman Catholic missionaries, and tolerated them only as directors of works and art industries. He even confiscated the Pei T'ang and turned it into a hospital for plague patients. The next Emperor Ch'ien Lung was more gracious. He sat to Attiret for his portrait. He entered into correspondence with Voltaire through Father Amiot, and took an interest in the painters who were embellishing his palace at Yuan Ming Yuan.

But toleration ceased altogether with his reign and after disfavour, neglect and, finally, open persecution, the Jesuits—whose Order had, meanwhile, been suppressed by the Pope—were replaced in 1783, at the request of the King of France, by the Lazarists. The Jesuits returned to Peking after the war of 1860 when Bishop Mouly, who may be regarded as the second founder of the Mission, again

²⁷⁶ Father Pedrini appears to have been a very worthy man, devout and generous. He built the Hsi T'ang, or Western Cathedral, at his own expense in 1723. But he had neither the opportunity nor the capacity to wield the influence of his predecessors.

assumed public charge of his flock, and the Abbé Delamarre slipped into the Chinese version of the Peking Treaty (without the knowledge of the French Minister) that famous clause which secured full rights and immunities for Christian Missions.

Once more, then, the Roman Catholics regained possession of their cherished Cathedral, the Pei T'ang. The original building was sold by order of the Emperor Tao Kuang in 1826 to a prince who allowed this church, that had been in the hands of the missionaries for more than a century, to fall into ruin. When it was returned, the priests found the iron grille presented by Louis XV. still hanging on its hinges at the entrance. They immediately installed a provisional chapel and here, on 29th October 1860, in the church re-opened after 30 years, a Te Deum was sung in honour of the victories of Napoleon III.

It was not long destined, however, to resound with Christian thanksgiving. After Kuang Hsü reached his majority and the Empress Dowager Tz'ü Hsi had to establish herself in the Sea Palaces, she found the minster so near to her dwelling quarters that the towers spoiled the "*fêng-shui*" of her gardens. The priests were accordingly persuaded to accept a new site further away. But the building remained standing in the Imperial domains, and foreigners often remarked on the strange anomaly of a Christian church in the precincts of an Oriental potentate who is one of the representatives on earth of Buddha. It long served as a kind of museum where, among musty silks and carpets, Father Armand David's

wonderful collection of stuffed birds and animals was left to be gradually eaten by insects. In 1900, when the French entered this old Pei T'ang (pulled down in 1909), they discovered, among other things, the remains of a mounted lion. Tradition says that while Father David was in Paris during the Siege of 1870, and people were eating the animals in the Zoological gardens, he obtained and mounted a skin for his collection in Peking, and that it was this same lion, victim of the Siege of Paris, whose pelt was found by the troops who came to relieve the Siege of Peking.

The present Pei T'ang is closely associated with the name of Bishop Favier, worthy successor of the early Jesuit fathers, who died in 1905 and is buried in one of the side chapels. Under his inspired leadership the enormous establishment which, in addition to the church, consists of an orphanage, a printing press, several schools, a cemetery, etc., weathered the Boxer outbreak of 1900. In fact, with only 31 French Marines and 11 Italians to reinforce the native converts, it sustained a siege lasting from June 15th to August 13th, more remarkable than that of the Legations. There were 400 victims out of 3,000 Christian refugees, besides one French officer killed, and nearly half that gallant little band of sailors either killed or wounded.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ "De toutes les défenses organisées pendant le siège de Pékin," said Monsieur Pichon (the well-known French statesman who was Minister for France in Peking at the time), "celle du Peitang est peut-être la plus étonnante et la plus remarquable."

In *Round About My Peking Garden*, Mrs. Archibald Little describes a visit to the half ruined Pei T'ang shortly after the Relief. "When we look at its façade riddled with shot, its aisles propped up by many beams, the trees in the grounds with their bark gnawed off, the tumble-down masses of brick and mortar behind the broken walls, the great pits where the mines exploded engulfing children by the hundred, they recall memories of heroism and yet of suffering so long endured that the heart aches . . . 'There,' says a young Portuguese Sister, her big brown eyes luminous with the recollection, 'there is where the Italian lieutenant was buried by a shell and for three hours we could not dig him out. No . . . He was alive and only bruised. Ah, the young French lieutenant, that was sad! He was so good. We could but grieve over his loss.' ²⁷⁸ Then we pause by the grave of the Sister Superior who lay dying as the relief came in, 'too late for me,' as she wrote—her one thought for days past: 'What can I give them to eat to-morrow? What can I give them to eat? There is nothing left.' . . . 'The poor soldiers,' said another Sister, 'they suffered so from hunger, although they tightened their belts every day. I tore all my letters into bits and made cigarettes of them. Burnt paper is better than nothing. And they had nothing to smoke.

²⁷⁸ In *L'Ame Bretonne*, Le Goffic pays, under the title of "Trois Marins," a touching and beautiful tribute to this young hero who had a presentiment that the Pei T'ang would be saved, but he himself would die there. His simple journal, published after his tragic death, gives an excellent picture of this remarkable siege.

That is so hard for a soldier.' Next we pause by the great pit where so many children, blown up by a mine, lie buried. . . . The Sisters are great authorities on mines and shells now. They know, too, which leaves are poisonous and tell how the Chinese Christians swelled and suffered trying to sustain life by eating them. They present the remainder of their school children. 'While the cannonading was going on, we nuns moved about the compound with the tail of our children after us wherever the firing seemed to be less dangerous,' said the young Portuguese Sister.

We paid a call upon the Bishop. 'Did any of your Christians recant'? we asked. 'A few, very few. I think 12,000 Converts lost their lives' [rather than deny their faith], replied Monseigneur Favier, 'besides three European and four Chinese priests, also many of our Chinese sisters. One priest hung, nailed on a cross, for three days before he died. Monseigneur Hamer they killed by cutting his arms and legs to the bone, filling the cuts with petroleum and setting them alight. What saved us? Oh! a series of miracles, nothing else.

Once again we stood outside the Cathedral. It was a beautiful bright Sunday morning this time, and the soldiers were streaming out from the Te Deum sung in honour of the deliverance—soldiers of all nationalities. We looked back at the shot marks on the ruined façade and realised that those shots were the call which had summoned this great gathering of the nations to the Imperial City of Peking, right into its heart, straight into

its forbidden precincts. How little the Chinese dreamed this would be the result when they fired them!"

Instead of wiping out the Pei T'ang as they hoped, the besiegers lived to see it repaired and decorated more handsomely than before, with a special chapel added in remembrance of their failure and two guns, inscribed "1606 Rotterdam," taken from the Boxers as trophies.

The Roman Catholics to-day have several other churches²⁷⁹ and chapels in Peking, besides schools for both sexes and orphanages in charge of Sisters of Charity who also serve as nurses in the Hospital of St. Michel built by Bishop Favier on the site of the old Board of Rites, and next door to the old offices of the Imperial Physicians. But the oldest and most interesting of their ecclesiastical property is at Sha La outside the P'ing Tsê Mên, best known for its famous cemetery, where the early scholars and propagandists lie in consecrated soil originally given by the Ming Emperor Wan Li for the tomb of his protégé Ricci in 1610.²⁸⁰ Likewise this sovereign commanded that an avenue of stone figures, such as we see at princely tombs, embellish the tomb of the only Westerner, except Sir Robert Hart, who ever received the rare honour of having not only himself but his parents and grandparents ennobled.

²⁷⁹ Such as the Tung T'ang, many times rebuilt, and, in the days of the Portuguese Jesuits, the finest church in Peking.

²⁸⁰ This land once belonged to a rich eunuch who had intended it for his own sepulchre, but, having committed some crime, he was condemned to death and his property confiscated.

When Schall and Verbiest died, K'ang Hsi buried them here at his own expense in costly tombs of Chinese style, and testified in Latin and in Chinese to their virtues on turtle-borne tablets. Dr. Edkins has preserved in his account of Peking²⁸¹ a description of the funeral of Father Verbiest, in which Chinese and Christian rites were curiously combined. He says that near the grave stood a great stone crucifix with altar-tables below it adorned with Buddhist emblems, the conventional vases, candlesticks and incense burners such as appear at important heathen tombs in China, and points out how significant these emblems are of the toleration of early evangelists, and the compromises in faith's mere ritual and externals which they conceded for conversion's sake.

In 1900 the Boxers burned Sha La and violated the tombs, of which there were originally more than 80. Much of their grandeur was ruined beyond repair, but, wherever possible, the old monuments were set up again. We can still wander among rows of graves and decypher on cracked slabs the battered inscriptions that mark the last resting places of that illustrious company.

Scarcely less romantic than the story of the early Catholic fathers is the history of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking. Its beginnings may be traced back to that little band of Albazine prisoners²⁸² who

²⁸¹ Published as an addendum to Williamson's *Journeys in North China*.

²⁸² See Chapter III.

brought their own priest, Father Leontieff, and the holy Icon of St. Nicholas with them to Peking in 1685 and worshipped in a small Chinese temple specially fitted up for their services in the north-east corner of the Tartar City—near the locality where the Russian Guards were given grants of land in the fourteenth century.

Ten years after the arrival of these Albazines, the Metropolitan of Tobolsk, in sending a communion cloth and recognising the little congregation, ordered that preaching among the Chinese should begin and prayers be offered for the Chinese emperor. "Pray thus," writes he quaintly, "after the petitions for the Tsar: 'We pray again to our Lord that He may spare His servant (name), His Bogdokhanic Majesty (as his titles are), and increase the years of his life and give him noble children in his succession, and deliver him and his *boyars* from all sorrow, wrath and need and all ailment of the soul and of the body, and open to him the light of the Gospel, and forgive him all sin, voluntary and involuntary, and unite him to the Holy Universal Apostolic Church, so that he may receive the Kingdom of Heaven'."

The old priest who accompanied the Albazine Bannermen and shared all their joys and sorrow, even following them on a Chinese expedition against the Kalmuks, died in 1712. The first Mission which came to replace him under the leadership of the Archimandrite Hilarion was received with much honour. But before it was permanently established Hilarion died and the Li Fan Yuan requested that a successor be sent to Peking. Peter the

Great planned to appoint a bishop but gave up the idea, some say in consequence of the intrigues of the Jesuits who were then getting into trouble in China against their own judgment, and were not in a position to contend against competitors who might prove dangerous. Subsequently, having lost their fear of possible rivalry on the part of Russian priests (who once nearly supplanted them in their posts on the Astronomical Board), the representatives of both creeds came to be on most cordial terms. Many mutual courtesies were shown in the course of relations. As already stated the Jesuit Father Gerbillon was of great assistance in concluding the celebrated Treaty of 1689 between Russia and China,²⁸³ just as Father Gourii in 1860 proved a valuable mediator during the second foreign war in Peking.

Looking back to earlier days, we see the Roman Catholics asking and getting an icon from the Russian envoy Nicholas Spathar in 1676 to be put up in the Nan T'ang for the convenience of Greek Christians who came to Peking with the Russian caravans long before the Albazines arrived, or they had a church of their own. This kindness was generously repaid when, after the bitter persecutions of Chia Ch'ing's reign, a Russian Archimandrite took charge of that same Nan T'ang (from 1826 to 1860).

When the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission was officially recognized by the Kiakhta Treaty of 1727, the friendliness

²⁸³ One of the three texts of this Treaty is even written in Latin.

of the Chinese Government towards the priests was shown in many ways: official rank, grants of land, etc. Old records relate that the Chinese even went so far as to recommend these Missionaries for Russian decorations and at one time undertook to pay them a yearly allowance in silver and rice according to a promise made to Father Hilarion. This astonishing engagement was faithfully observed until the Tientsin Treaty of 1858.

It was not because of sympathy with their creed, for they hated Christianity in all its forms, that Yung Cheng and his heirs assisted the Russian monks while at the same time persecuting the Jesuits, but rather because during the 175 years of pre-Legation residence in Peking there was never a single anti-orthodox missionary disturbance.²⁵⁴

The reason these priests escaped the ill-will manifested towards the Roman Catholics was undoubtedly due to the fact that they did not meddle in state affairs, and were men sufficiently modest not to invite jealousy, sufficiently wise to be reasonable in their attempts at proselytising, and never to try by means of religious doctrine to bring the Chinese under the political wing of the Church, while at the same time often discharging diplomatic services to mutual advantage. The work of the Mission was, in fact, less evangelistic than literary and scientific.

²⁵⁴ Only one slight ripple disturbed the smooth surface of their relations with the Chinese when, for a few years, about 1760 the priests were confined in the Mission owing to a temporary estrangement in Russo-Chinese political relations.

A succession of distinguished students and Archimandrites have written books which are still among the best authorities on the social life of the Chinese, the tribes of Central Asia, the history and geography of China, Mongolia and Thibet as well as many studies on various religions, Taoism, Nestorianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, including in these last years a history of the Russian Orthodox Mission in China.²⁸⁵

Father Hyacinth Bitchurin,²⁸⁶ to name the most striking among the scholars, had exceptional capacities blended with a temperament so fiery that it could not adapt itself to monastic discipline and routine. During his long residence in Peking as head of the Mission (1808-1821), his many weaknesses, upon which the highest Chinese authorities looked with fatherly solicitude, were far more notorious than his studies. Returning to Russia in disgrace, the vast knowledge he had collected somehow soon rehabilitated him in the eyes of his superiors and in 25 years he accomplished a stupendous task in original translation and commentary, achieving at last a right to the reverence of posterity and a memorable place in science.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Many of them also taught in the official Russian Language School established by the Chinese Government in the eighteenth century.

Unfortunately their valuable and scholarly works are nearly all inaccessible to persons unversed in Russian.

²⁸⁶ See footnote in Preface.

²⁸⁷ In the Alexander Nevsky monastery at Petrograd, the Chinese epitaph on his tomb reminds those who visit it of the land he loved so well, the land where he lived, failed and struggled and from which his genius drew its inspiration.

The buildings of the Pei Kuan, or "Northern Hostelry," where the Mission established itself after the Russian Legation took over its old site, were blown up by dynamite in the Boxer disturbance of 1900. Most of the native Christians, descendants of the Albazines, were thrown down a well (still to be seen in the garden) vainly crying out for mercy. "Kill, kill! burn, burn! let not one Christian remain alive, nor one remembrance of him!" shrieked the fanatics, as they passed on to set the torch to the priceless library accumulated through two centuries by men like Hyacinth, Polycarpus, and Palladius—among the rest the collection of books acquired at the request of Anglo-American Missionaries in connection with plans for a Union of Churches. They represented one of the first steps towards a fine ideal. Who knows what it might not have meant to Christianity had it been realised.²⁸⁸

Happily, the famous Nicholas Icon was preserved and may be seen blackened by age in the new church. Together with a few treasures of the Monastery, the monks carried it with them to the Yung Ho Kung where they lived temporarily. They went back afterwards to their same property, enlarged now by the purchase

²⁸⁸ The jealousies of the different sects of Christianity have enormously increased the difficulties in the way of China's conversion. A highly educated Chinese gentleman once appealed to Freeman-Mitford on the subject. "How is it," he inquired, "that if I go to one teacher and talk to him of what I have learned from another, he answers me: 'No, that is not right. That is the doctrine preached by So-and-So. If you follow him, you will go to hell.' " Is it any wonder that the inquirer grows suspicious and confused?

of the Palace of the Fourth Prince.²⁸⁹ Undaunted, undiscouraged, they gradually built up their establishment again into a typical Russian monastery, save that the bishop's house, remodelled from one of the princely palace halls, gives an unmistakable Far Eastern note to the picture. Besides the Cathedral, rebuilt on the site of the old Church of the Assumption or of Saint Nicholas (first consecrated in 1696), the priests erected a commemorative church over the remains of the martyrs, and various other buildings—schools and quarters for priests and nuns. Following the Russian monastic custom they also added all that was required to make the community self-supporting. The whirl of a flour mill may be heard in one corner of the park. Scattered under the trees are bee-hives. The lowing of magnificent cattle denotes the presence of a dairy not far off. A busy printing press provides for the spiritual needs of the flock.

The whole impression is one of monastic calm, joined to unhurried industry, so strongly reminiscent of old Russia itself, so close to Earth and yet so near to Heaven, so patient and so capable when dealing with things that feed the souls and bodies of men. Perhaps these very qualities form the link between Russia and the Orient.

Associated with the Mission is the picturesque Russian cemetery between the An Ting Mên and the Yellow Temple, close to the spot where the Allies breached the north wall of the city in 1860. Many of the first members of the Mission lie in the shadow of the little

²⁸⁹ His tomb may be seen near T'ang Shan.

chapel with its characteristic gilded cupola and, strange to say, some British Protestants, men murdered by the Chinese in 1860, were kindly granted sepulture here.

Not till long after the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox priests did Protestant Missionaries begin to work in Peking. They, too, profited by the surreptitious clause in the French treaty and came to the capital shortly after the Chinese Government was forced to receive foreign diplomats at the Court after 1860. Times had changed since Wan Li welcomed Ricci and the Chinese Ministers took a paternal interest in the morals of Father Hyacinth, aiding him to overcome temptation by placing over his gate : "Undesirable persons must not enter here."

They were offered, even though they might have refused it, no official rank. They were presented with no princely palaces, earned no gratitude save the gratitude of the poor and sick, and not always that, for the people were so ignorant that they mistrusted unselfish motives. They had, in a word, but one exclusive privilege—their faith.

The Protestant pioneers in the capital were members of the London Missionary Society, who made their headquarters at first in the British Legation itself. In those early days it was very hard for the Missions to secure property. If it were known a piece of land was about to be sold to the Christians, this was a signal for a small riot in which the owner might suffer personal violence and his house be torn down about his ears.

In some cases where a place was finally bought, it was necessary for the foreigners to remain personally in possession lest it be wrecked by their unwilling neighbours.

The Church of England work was begun in Peking in 1862 by members of the Church Missionary Society. On its present fine property in the West City, near the "Elephant House Bridge," stands a large school for boys and a handsome Cathedral, a combination of Chinese and Western architecture planned by the universally beloved Bishop Scott.

In 1863 Dr. W. A. P. Martin, the well-known sinologue, arrived and started the work of the American Presbyterian Mission in the north city, and in 1864 the Rev. Henry Blodget established the American Board Mission (Congregational).

The first Methodist Episcopal Church followed in 1869, and the compound around it served as the refuge of many foreigners and Chinese before they went into the British Legation during the Boxer trouble.

Other sects followed till now we find churches and chapels, ministering to almost every shade of Christian belief, scattered over the city. Moreover, workers combining special forms of social service with religion, such as the Salvation Army and the Y.M.C.A., have come to serve the Chinese.²⁹⁰

²⁹⁰ The Y.M.C.A. has a large building on the Hata Mén Street, the gift of John Wanamaker, the merchant millionaire of Philadelphia, and the Salvation Army—a fine hall, built in Chinese style, in the Wang Fu Ching Ta Chieh.

Most of these Missions and societies have a large central compound with subsidiary chapels or branches under their control, established in places where business or pleasure call the Chinese together in large numbers. Their doors are open every day and passers-by are invited to come and listen to the Gospel preaching.

How much is accomplished from the religious standpoint we prefer not to discuss. The Roman Catholics claim to make 100,000 converts a year, largely, of course, children rescued from destitution and brought up in their schools and orphanages.²⁹¹ What success attends the various Protestant sects in their work of conversion we cannot say, having no available figures to judge by—if such results may indeed be judged entirely by figures.

But one fact is patent to the most casual observer, and that is the impression which the schools and hospitals in charge of the missionaries are making upon the Chinese people. The Chinese are not slow to see the business advantages of a foreign education nowadays, as is evidenced by the hundreds of students who attend the Peking University attached to the Methodist Mission near the Hata Mên—grown from the small beginnings of the Wiley Institute founded in 1885 for advanced Students and chartered as a full fledged University in 1890 by the State of New York. Whether the new system of

²⁹¹ At this rate, by calculation, we conclude that it will take four thousand years more to convert the whole empire. To this the priests reply that there are only 2,000 priests working in China, and if the 200,000 priests working in the whole world had the same success as these, there would be a gain of 10,000,000 a year for the Church.

education will prove in the long run as well suited to the Chinese character as the old Confucian system, time alone can show. China unquestionably needs newer and higher forms of teaching, but many think that these must be evolved from the ancient standards, from within and never from without. All agree, however, that the education offered by the Christian schools and colleges aims at making the students morally more compassionate and beneficent to their fellow-beings, and physically more manly by encouraging healthy sport with its lessons in fair-play, unselfish subordination to the rules of the game and combined effort. This will be especially beneficial in the case of the girls and young women, whose activities, mental and physical, have long been cramped by bound feet and confined lives.

The majority of the higher schools are intended to prepare students for advanced courses in the Universities of Europe or America. This is the case with the Ch'ing Hua College to the north-west of Peking, near the site of the old Summer Palace, built on part of the ground that once belonged to the Fourth Prince. When it was found that the amount of the Boxer indemnity paid to the United States was in excess of that required to make good the losses sustained through Boxer activities, it was decided to pay back the balance to China on condition that the money be used in founding an institution to prepare students for further study abroad. To-day, this college appears like a miniature modern town. Its buildings represent the purely utilitarian architecture of

the twentieth century: they might be situated equally well in Chicago or Cleveland. All that the most modern Western university could wish for may be found here: a magnificent campus, a fully equipped hospital, a fine library, a splendid gymnasium and swimming tank. Thirty American professors direct the 300 students in modern courses of study and inspire their leisure, encouraging Glee Clubs and college magazines, such as they themselves knew at home. But the president has always been a Chinese and he directs the general policy of the institution which is not avowedly Christian, though many of the teachers use their influence to spread the Gospel. Probably not long hence, the establishment will be raised to the university grade of work, as many thoughtful Chinese themselves believe that it is better for their growing generation not to go abroad while still young. The West, with its vast difference of outlook and standards, is apt to prove unsettling to the man who must come back and pass his life in China—unless he is old enough to have his mental balance and judge very clearly.

More powerful even than the schools, as witnesses for Christianity, are hospitals. The hospitals that missionaries have founded, and the order and propriety in which they have been kept, have justly entitled them to a high place in the affection of the people. As often as we visit them, we find throughout cleanliness, good management, careful and attentive treatment. We see sick old men cared for as by their own sons, helpless women and little

children watched over with a mother's tenderness. We see dispensaries open to all without distinction and before most of us have had our breakfast, the good sister or the compassionate nurse has dried many tears. All honour to those of every creed, who, before laying their weary bodies down to rest at night, have the happiness of rendering an account to the Supreme Being of a thousand pains and sorrows healed during the day.

From what small beginnings many of these hospitals have grown and how ill-repaid at first were those heroic doctors and nurses! But these days are past. A surgeon who cuts off a woman's leg to save her life is no longer expected to provide for her during her remaining years because the family considers he has cheated fate. Wards are not wrecked because some evil person spreads a report that children's eyes are being used as medicine. Primitive conditions, the lack of proper appliances, against which devoted physicians contended in early days, have given place to every modern convenience.

The new hospital of the Rockefeller Foundation²⁹² is a model in this respect. Outwardly its 18 buildings, those behind—a story higher than those in front to give an artistic impression, resemble the Palace halls.²⁹³ Within, they contain many of the latest devices to mitigate suffering and to advance research.

²⁹² On the site of the palace of Prince Yü, the first of the princes of the Eastern branch. (See "Race Course" footnote, Chapter XII).

²⁹³ Their tiles were made at the old Imperial tile works (Liu Li Chü) on the Hun river, opposite the village of San Chia Tien.

But let us not forget, in their magnificence, all the years of patient work that made the Chinese able to appreciate such gifts. Let us not forget that for the last 250 years the Catholic and Orthodox Missionaries, and for the last 100 years the Protestants, have been working to overcome superstitions. Remember the proverb: "*La critique est aisée, l'art est difficile.*" Therefore let us leave aside the moot point whether the Chinese ever become good Christians, and admit that the missionaries have undoubtedly helped set a higher standard of living, alleviated much suffering and saved many lives, vastly contributing at the same time to our knowledge of the Land of Sinim.

APPENDIX I.

THE DYNASTIES OF CHINA.

LEGENDARY PERIOD. ABOUT 3000-2205 B.C.

FU HSI (伏羲).

SHEN NUNG (神農), the first Farmer who taught the people to till their fields.

HUANG TI (黃帝), ruled for 100 years, invented wheeled vehicles, armour, ships, etc.

YAO (堯), known as one of the Perfect Emperors, lived during the Chinese deluge.

SHUN (舜), also known as a Perfect Emperor and one of the 24 classical examples of filial piety.

YÜ (禹), the Great.

THE HSIA DYNASTY (夏紀). 17 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Ho Nan Fu (Lo Yang 洛陽), 2205-1766 B.C.

THE SHANG DYNASTY (商紀). 28 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Ho Nan Fu, later Hsi An Fu (Ch'ang An 長安).
1766-1122 B.C.

THE CHOU DYNASTY (周紀). 37 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Hsi An Fu, then Ho Nan Fu. 1122-255 B.C.

The Feudal Age. The later period of this dynasty is famous as the era of the philosophers, Lao Tzŭ, Confucius and Mencius.

THE CH'IN DYNASTY (秦紀). 4 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Hsi An Fu. 255-206 B.C.

The founder of this dynasty was Ch'in Shih Huang Ti (秦始皇帝), sometimes called the Napoleon of China. He built the Great Wall and, having unified the Empire, adopted the title of Supreme Ruler. After his death his dynasty soon collapsed and was succeeded by the famous Hans.

THE HAN DYNASTY (西漢紀 FORMER OR WESTERN),

14 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Hsi An Fu. 206 B.C.—A.D. 25.

THE HAN DYNASTY (東漢紀 LATER OR EASTERN).

14 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Ho Nan Fu. A.D. 25-220.

THE PERIOD OF THE THREE KINGDOMS (三國).

A.D. 220-265.

VARIOUS MINOR DYNASTIES followed which are of little interest or importance to the general reader.

THE T'ANG DYNASTY (唐紀). 20 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Hsi An Fu. A.D. 618-907.

This is often called the Golden Age of Chinese Learning.

PERIOD OF THE FIVE DYNASTIES (五代). 13 SOVEREIGNS.

A.D. 907-960.

None of these ephemeral dynasties exercised control over the whole of China, and the country not being in a position to present a united front to a foreign foe was the more easily conquered by the Tartars.

THE LIAO (遼紀 OR KHITAN 契丹紀 TARTAR) DYNASTY.

9 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Peking (北京). A.D. 915-1125.

THE CHIN (金紀 NÜCHEN TARTAR) DYNASTY. 10 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Liao Yang (遼陽), then Peking. A.D. 1125-1234.

These dynasties in the north were contemporary with the SUNG DYNASTY in the south, the Chins being first the allies and then the conquerors of the Sung. The Mongols finally swept in, overthrew the Chins, and eventually the Sung also.

THE SUNG DYNASTY (宋紀) (NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN).

18 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital K'ai Fêng Fu (開封府), then Nanking (南京) and Hangchow (杭州). A.D. 960-1260 (1279).

THE YUAN (元紀 MONGOL) DYNASTY. 10 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Peking. A.D. 1260-1368.

Shih Tsu (世祖) or Kublai Khan, who reigned from A.D. 1260 to 1294, was the first of the descendants of the great Genghis Khan to establish supremacy over the whole of China and to fix his capital at Peking. In his title as Emperor of the Mongols, his sway was recognised from Borneo to the Carpathians.

THE MING DYNASTY (明紀). 16 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Nanking, then Peking. A.D. 1368-1644.

HUNG WU	(洪武)	T'ai Tsu	太祖	1368-1398.
CHIEN WEN	(建文)	Hui Ti	惠帝	1398-1402 (deposed).
YUNG LOH	(永樂)	Ch'eng Tsu	成祖	1402-1424.
HUNG HSI	(洪熙)	Jen Tsung	仁宗	1424-1425.
HSÜAN TÊH	(宣德)	Hsuan Tsung	宣宗	1425-1435.
CHENG T'UNG	(正統)	Ying Tsung	英宗	1435-1449 and again from 1457-1464.
CHING T'AI	(景泰)	Tai Tsung	代宗	1449-1457.
CH'ENG HUA	(成化)	Hsien Tsung	憲宗	1464-1487.
HUNG CHIH	(弘治)	Hsiao Tsung	孝宗	1487-1505.
CHENG TÊH	(正德)	Wu Tsung	武宗	1505-1521.
CHIA CHING	(嘉靖)	Shih Tsung	世宗	1521-1566.
LUNG CH'ING	(隆慶)	Mu Tsung	穆宗	1566-1572.
WAN LI	(萬曆)	Shen Tsung	神宗	1572-1620.
T'AI CH'ANG	(泰昌)	Kuang Tsung	光宗	1620. Reigned only one month.
T'IENT CH'Y	(天啓)	Hsi Tsung	熹宗	1620-1627.
CH'UNG CHENG	(崇禎)	Huai Tsung	懷宗 or Chuang Lieh Ti 莊烈帝	1627-1644.

THE CH'ING (清紀 MANCHU) DYNASTY. 10 SOVEREIGNS.

Capital Peking. A.D. 1644-1911.

SHUN CHIH	(順治)	Shih Tsu	Chang Huang Ti	世祖章皇帝	1644-1661.
K'ANG HSI	(康熙)	Sheng Tsu	Jen Huang Ti	聖祖仁皇帝	1661-1722.
YUNG CHENG	(雍正)	Shih Tsung	Hsien Huang Ti	世宗憲皇帝	1722-1735.
CH'IENT LUNG	(乾隆)	Kao Tsung	Shun Huang Ti	高宗純皇帝	1735. Abdicated 1796. Died 1799.
CHIA CH'ING	(嘉慶)	Jen Tsung	Jui Huang Ti	仁宗睿皇帝	1796-1820.

TAO KUANG (道光) Hsuan Tsung Ch'eng Huang Ti 宣宗成皇帝
1820-1850.

HSIEN Fêng (咸豐) Wen Tsung Hsien Huang Ti 文宗顯皇帝
1850-1861.

T'UNG CHIH (同治) Mu Tsung Yi Huang Ti 穆宗毅皇帝
1861-1874.

KUANG HSÜ (光緒) T'eh Tsung Ching Huang Ti 德宗景皇帝
1874-1908.

HSÜAN T'UNG (宣統). Abdicated 1912 in favour of the Republic.

The first name given is the title of the reign; the second, the personal posthumous title of the emperor.

APPENDIX II.

THE PRINCIPAL FESTIVALS AND FAIRS IN PEKING.

(All these festivals and fairs are held by the old Chinese—lunar—calendar, according to which their dates are given.)

FIRST MOON, 1ST—5TH.

New Year (*hsin nien* 新年) festivities, including illuminations and the pasting of new “lucky” pictures and inscriptions on walls and doors. Sacrifices are made at this season to the Gods of Luck 福神 and of Riches 財神. Festival of the Buddha Maitreya.

FIRST MOON, 1ST—15TH.

Fair at the Bell Temple (Ta Chung Ssü).

FIRST MOON, 3RD—16TH.

Liu Li Ch'ang fair.

FIRST MOON, 13TH.

“Devil Dance” at the Yellow Temple. Festival of Kuan Ti (關帝).

FIRST MOON, 14TH—16TH.

“Lantern Festival” (*têng chieh* 燈節—a continuation of the New Year festivities) and various lantern fairs.

FIRST MOON, 18TH.

End of “Lantern Festival.” This is supposed to be the day on which rats marry, and everybody must go to bed early for fear of disturbing them and being annoyed by them in revenge throughout the whole year. Star Festival (*chi hsing* 祭星).

FIRST MOON, 19TH.

“Gathering of the Hundred Gods” (會神仙節). Fair at Po Yün Kuan.

FIRST MOON, 30TH.

"Devil Dance" at Lama Temple (Yung Ho Kung).

SECOND MOON, 2ND.

"*Lung t'ai t'ou*" 龍抬頭 the day on which the "Dragon raises his head." Festival of the Patrons of villages (土地).

SECOND MOON, 3RD.

Birthday of Erh Lang (二郎), "the Prince of the Heavenly Tao."

SECOND MOON, 19TH.

Birthday of the Kuan Yin Pussa (觀音 Avalokiteshvara). Services at all her temples.

Service at the Confucian Temple (the date of this ceremony varies).

THIRD MOON, 1ST—3RD.

Festival of the Hsi Wang Mu (西王母). Fair at the P'an T'ao Kung.

THIRD MOON, 15TH—28TH.

Festival of the Spirit of Mount T'ai Shan (東嶽大帝) at the Tung Yueh Miao.

The *Ch'ing Ming* (清明)—the Spring Festival (the date is variable). On this day the graves of parents are repaired and offerings are made at them.

Fair at the Ch'eng Huang Miao (in the Chinese City).

FOURTH MOON, 1ST—18TH.

Pilgrimage to Miao Fêng Shan, to the shrines of the three Niang Niang Pussas ("The Heavenly Mother" 天仙娘娘, "Our Lady of Many Sons" 子孫娘娘 and "Our Lady of Good Eyesight" 眼光娘娘)

FOURTH MOON, 8TH.

Birthday of Buddha. Washing of images in Buddhist temples.

Fair near the Kao Liang bridge, connected with the temple of the Pi Hsia Yuan Chün (碧霞元君) "the Princess of the Coloured Clouds."

FOURTH MOON, 13TH.

Festival of the Yao Wang (藥王), the God of Medicine.

FOURTH MOON, 14TH.

Festival of the Taoist Immortal Lü Tsu (呂祖) and the Fire God (火神).

are held in most of the temples of which peony gardens are a feature).

(The third and fourth moons are the season of peonies, and fairs

FIFTH MOON, 5TH.

"The Dragon Boat Festival" or "Festival of the Fifth Moon" (*wu yüeh chieh* 五月節), coinciding with the Summer Solstice. The most popular Chinese festival after the New Year. Of old the amusements on this day were diversified by many quaint sports. For instance, a special game of polo took place inside the Palace, with the Hsi Hua Mên serving as a goal. Frog-hunting expeditions were undertaken to the Southern Hunting Park (Nan Hai Tzū), etc.

SIXTH MOON.

Coincides with the beginning of the three periods (*fu*) of summer heat. Sacrifices are made on the 22nd to the Dragon Kings (龍王) of springs and wells, such sacrifices being also offered in the second and eighth moons.

SEVENTH MOON, 7TH.

"Meeting of the Cowherd and the Weaver" (Niu Lang 牛郎 and Chi Nü 織女), the latter being the patroness of needlework. The God of Literature (魁星 or 文昌) is also honoured on this day.

SEVENTH MOON, 15TH.

"All Souls' Day" (*chung yuan chieh* 中元節) set aside for the summer visit to ancestral tombs.

EIGHTH MOON, 15TH.

"The Harvest Moon Festival" (*chung ch'iu chieh* 中秋節), coinciding with the Autumn Equinox—the third great Chinese popular festival in the year. Offerings which must be round in shape and consist mostly of vegetables are made on this day to the Moon, the

Heavenly Matchmaker ("The Old Man of the Moon" 月老) and to the benign Moon Hare. Numerous figures and pictures of the latter may be seen on sale for presents to children. The vegetable markets are particularly animated on this day.

Sacrifices to Confucius.

TENTH MOON, 1ST.

Winter offerings to the dead, consisting mostly of representations of clothing.

TWELFTH MOON, 30TH.

All the Buddhas visit the Earth.

EVERY MOON, 9TH—10TH, 19TH—20TH AND 29—30TH.

Fair at Lung Fu Ssü.

EVERY MOON, 7TH—8TH, 17TH—18TH AND 27TH—28TH.

Fair at Hu Kuo Ssü.

EVERY MOON, 3RD, 6TH, 13TH, 16TH, 19TH, 23RD, 28TH AND 29TH.

"Night Market" (*yeh shih* 夜市) outside the Ch'ien Mên.

EVERY MOON, 2ND, 5TH, 8TH, 12TH, 15TH, 18TH, 22ND, 25TH AND 28TH.

"Night Market" outside the Hata Mên.

EVERY MOON, 2ND AND 16TH.

Pilgrimages to the small temple of the God of Riches (Ts'ai Shen Miao) outside the Chang Yi Mên.

Fairs at the T'u Ti Miao (土地廟), between the Liu Li Ch'ang and the Chang Yi Mên, and outside the Hata Mên, the latter being known as the "Flower Market" (*hua erh shih* 花兒市). These fairs are held several times a month and their dates are variable.

This list is necessarily brief. It would be too long to catalogue all the festivals of the better known saints, heroes and sages which recur several times in the course of the year, or the days of worship of minor divinities whose cult is nevertheless observed, such as the Kitchen God, or the Protector of Horses (both in the eighth moon). Many pages would be required to give even an outline of the innumerable customs and superstitions which fill every day of the Chinese calendar (*see*, for instance, Henri Doré's great work: *Récherches sur les superstitions chinoises*). Many of them are now being rapidly forgotten, but a great number still play an important part in the life of the Chinese people.

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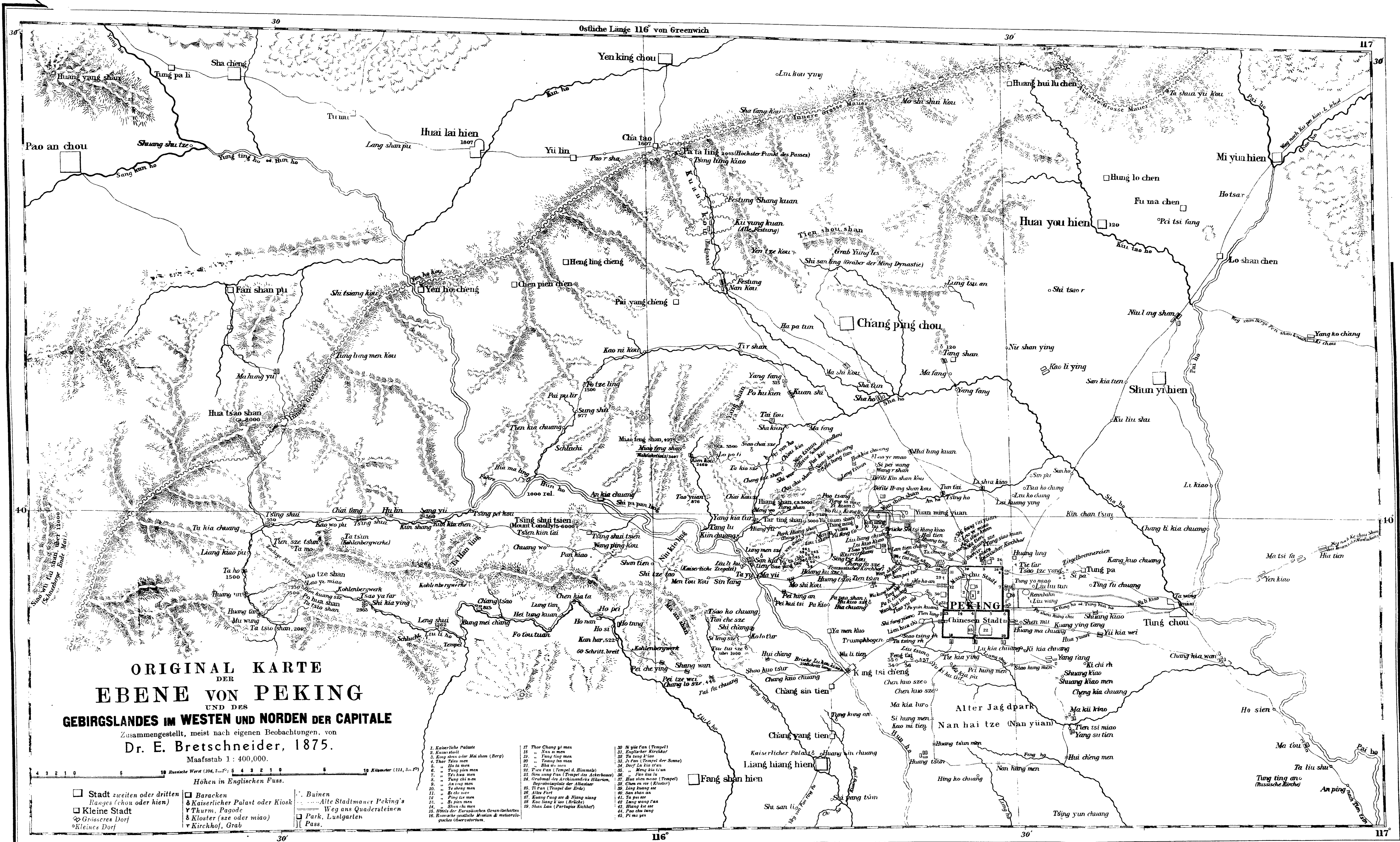
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NOTE:—This map of Bretschneider's, made in Peking while he was doctor of the Russian Legation, remains the best plan of the surroundings of the Capital. The works of this eminent scholar being out of print, only the Gotha edition of this map was available for reproduction here.



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